

A HEAP O' LIVIN'  
ALONG  
LIFE'S HIGHWAY

*Eager A. Guest*











PART ONE

A HEAP O' LIVIN'

*By*  
Edgar A. Guest

*Verse—*

The Light of Faith  
A Heap o' Livin'  
Just Folks  
Poems of Patriotism  
The Path to Home  
When Day Is Done  
The Passing Throng  
Rhymes of Childhood  
Harbor Lights of Home  
The Friendly Way  
Life's Highway

*Prose—*

What My Religion Means to Me  
Making the House a Home  
My Job as a Father  
Why I Go to Church  
You Can't Live Your Own Life

# A Heap o' Livin'

By

Edgar A. Guest



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*A Heap o' Livin'*

## FOREWORD

The blending of these two books, "A Heap o' Livin'" and "Life's Highway," into one, comes at a fitting time. It will mark the completion of twenty years of most happy association with my publishers, and for that reason I am particularly pleased by this union.

"A Heap o' Livin'" was the first book of mine to come from the press of Reilly & Lee. I never take it up without recalling that day in 1916 when I first saw those brain children of mine brought together in permanent form. That it contains many of my own favorites I think I need not take space to tell, but I should like to say that for reasons too intimate to be written, but easily guessed and understood, this particular first volume has always been first in my affections also. "Life's Highway" followed it years later. As I see these two books now brought under one cover I must confess to a glow of pride akin to that of a devoted father who lives to see two of his boys go into business together.

—EDGAR A. GUEST



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## WHEN YOU KNOW A FELLOW

When you get to know a fellow, know his joys  
and know his cares,  
When you've come to understand him and the  
burdens that he bears,  
When you've learned the fight he's making and  
the troubles in his way,  
Then you find that he is different than you  
thought him yesterday.  
You find his faults are trivial and there's not so  
much to blame  
In the brother that you jeered at when you only  
knew his name.

You are quick to see the blemish in the distant  
neighbor's style,  
You can point to all his errors and may sneer  
at him the while,  
And your prejudices fatten and your hates  
more violent grow  
As you talk about the failures of the man you  
do not know,  
But when drawn a little closer, and your hands  
and shoulders touch,  
You find the traits you hated really don't  
amount to much.

When you get to know a fellow, know his every mood and whim,  
You begin to find the texture of the splendid side of him;  
You begin to understand him, and you cease to scoff and sneer,  
For with understanding always prejudices disappear.  
You begin to find his virtues and his faults you cease to tell,  
For you seldom hate a fellow when you know him very well.

When next you start in sneering and your phrases turn to blame,  
Know more of him you censure than his business and his name;  
For it's likely that acquaintance would your prejudice dispel  
And you'd really come to like him if you knew him very well.  
When you get to know a fellow and you understand his ways,  
Then his faults won't really matter, for you'll find a lot to praise.

## THE ROUGH LITTLE RASCAL

A smudge on his nose and a smear on his cheek  
And knees that might not have been washed in  
a week;

A bump on his forehead, a scar on his lip,  
A relic of many a tumble and trip:  
A rough little, tough little rascal, but sweet,  
Is he that each evening I'm eager to meet.

A brow that is beady with jewels of sweat;  
A face that's as black as a visage can get;  
A suit that at noon was a garment of white,  
Now one that his mother declares is a fright:  
A fun-loving, sun-loving rascal, and fine,  
Is he that comes placing his black fist in mine.

A crop of brown hair that is tousled and tossed;  
A waist from which two of the buttons are lost;  
A smile that shines out through the dirt and the  
grime,

And eyes that are flashing delight all the time:  
All these are the joys that I'm eager to meet  
And look for the moment I get to my street

## IT ISN'T COSTLY

Does the grouch get richer quicker than the friendly sort of man?

Can the grumbler labor better than the cheerful fellow can?

Is the mean and churlish neighbor any cleverer than the one

Who shouts a glad "good morning," and then smiling passes on?

Just stop and think about it. Have you ever known or seen

A mean man who succeeded, just because he was so mean?

When you find a grouch with honors and with money in his pouch,

You can bet he didn't win them just because he was a grouch.

Oh, you'll not be any poorer if you smile along your way,

And your lot will not be harder for the kindly things you say.

Don't imagine you are wasting time for others that you spend:

You can rise to wealth and glory and still pause to be a friend.

## MY CREED

To live as gently as I can;  
To be, no matter where, a man;  
To take what comes of good or ill  
And cling to faith and honor still;  
To do my best, and let that stand  
The record of my brain and hand;  
And then, should failure come to me,  
Still work and hope for victory.

To have no secret place wherein  
I stoop unseen to shame or sin;  
To be the same when I'm alone  
As when my every deed is known;  
To live undaunted, unafraid  
Of any step that I have made;  
To be without pretense or sham  
Exactly what men think I am.

To leave some simple mark behind  
To keep my having lived in mind;  
If enmity to aught I show,  
To be an honest, generous foe,  
To play my little part, nor whine  
That greater honors are not mine.  
This, I believe, is all I need  
For my philosophy and creed.

## A WISH

I'd like to be a boy again, a care-free prince of  
joy again,  
I'd like to tread the hills and dales the way I  
used to do;  
I'd like the tattered shirt again, the knickers  
thick with dirt again,  
The ugly, dusty feet again that long ago I  
knew.  
I'd like to play first base again, and Sliver's  
curves to face again,  
I'd like to climb, the way I did, a friendly  
apple tree;  
For, knowing what I do to-day, could I but  
wander back and play,  
I'd get full measure of the joy that boy-  
hood gave to me.

I'd like to be a lad again, a youngster, wild and  
glad again,  
I'd like to sleep and eat again the way I used  
to do;  
I'd like to race and run again, and drain from  
life its fun again,  
And start another round of joy the moment  
one was through.  
But care and strife have come to me, and often  
days are glum to me,

And sleep is not the thing it was and food  
is not the same;  
And I have sighed, and known that I must  
journey on again to sigh,  
And I have stood at envy's point and heard  
the voice of shame.

I've learned that joys are fleeting things; that  
parting pain each meeting brings;  
That gain and loss are partners here, and so  
are smiles and tears;  
That only boys from day to day can drain and  
fill the cup of play;  
That age must mourn for what is lost  
throughout the coming years.  
But boys cannot appreciate their priceless joy  
until too late  
And those who own the charms I had will  
soon be changed to men;  
And then, they too will sit, as I, and backward  
turn to look and sigh  
And share my longing, vain, to be a care-  
free boy again.

## WHAT A BABY COSTS

“How much do babies cost?” said he  
The other night upon my knee;  
And then I said: “They cost a lot;  
A lot of watching by a cot,  
A lot of sleepless hours and care,  
A lot of heart-ache and despair,  
A lot of fear and trying dread,  
And sometimes many tears are shed  
In payment for our babies small,  
But every one is worth it all.

“For babies people have to pay  
A heavy price from day to day —  
There is no way to get one cheap.  
Why, sometimes when they’re fast asleep  
You have to get up in the night  
And go and see that they’re all right.  
But what they cost in constant care  
And worry, does not half compare  
With what they bring of joy and bliss —  
You’d pay much more for just a kiss.

“Who buys a baby has to pay  
A portion of the bill each day;  
He has to give his time and thought  
Unto the little one he’s bought.  
He has to stand a lot of pain  
Inside his heart and not complain;

And pay with lonely days and sad  
For all the happy hours he's had.  
All this a baby costs, and yet  
His smile is worth it all, you bet."

## MOTHER

Never a sigh for the cares that she bore for me,  
Never a thought of the joys that flew by;  
Her one regret that she couldn't do more for me,  
Thoughtless and selfish, her Master was I.

Oh, the long nights that she came at my call to  
me!

Oh, the soft touch of her hands on my brow!  
Oh, the long years that she gave up her all to  
me!

Oh, how I yearn for her gentleness now!

Slave to her baby! Yes, that was the way of  
her,  
Counting her greatest of services small;  
Words cannot tell what this old heart would  
say of her,  
Mother — the sweetest and fairest of all.

## SELFISH

I am selfish in my wishin' every sort o' joy for  
you;  
I am selfish when I tell you that I'm wishin'  
skies o' blue  
Bending o'er you every minute, and a pocketful  
of gold,  
An' as much of love an' gladness as a human  
heart can hold.  
Coz I know beyond all question that if such a  
thing could be  
As you cornerin' life's riches you would share  
'em all with me.

I am selfish in my wishin' every sorrow from  
your way,  
With no trouble thoughts to fret you at the  
closin' o' the day;  
An' it's selfishness that bids me wish you com-  
forts by the score,  
An' all the joys you long for, an' on top o'  
them, some more;  
Coz I know, old tried an' faithful, that if such  
a thing could be  
As you cornerin' life's riches you would share  
'em all with me.

## RICH

Who has a troop of romping youth  
About his parlor floor,  
Who nightly hears a round of cheers,  
When he is at the door,  
Who is attacked on every side  
By eager little hands  
That reach to tug his grizzled mug,  
The wealth of earth commands.

Who knows the joys of girls and boys,  
His lads and lassies, too,  
Who's pounced upon and bounced upon  
When his day's work is through,  
Whose trousers know the gentle tug  
Of some glad little tot,  
The baby of his crew of love,  
Is wealthier than a lot.

Oh, be he poor and sore distressed  
And weary with the fight,  
If with a whoop his healthy troop  
Run, welcoming at night,  
And kisses greet him at the end  
Of all his toiling grim,  
With what is best in life he's blest  
And rich men envy him.

## MA AND THE AUTO

Before we take an auto ride Pa says to Ma:

“My dear,

Now just remember I don’t need suggestions  
from the rear.

If you will just sit still back there and hold  
in check your fright,

I’ll take you where you want to go and get  
you back all right.

Remember that my hearing’s good and also I’m  
not blind,

And I can drive this car without suggestions  
from behind.”

Ma promises that she’ll keep still, then off we  
gayly start,

But soon she notices ahead a peddler and his  
cart.

“You’d better toot your horn,” says she, “to let  
him know we’re near;

He might turn out!” and Pa replies: “Just  
shriek at him, my dear.”

And then he adds: “Some day, some guy will  
make a lot of dough

By putting horns on tonneau seats for women-  
folks to blow!”

A little farther on Ma cries: "He signaled for a turn!"

And Pa says: "Did he?" in a tone that's hot enough to burn.

"Oh, there's a boy on roller skates!" cries Ma.  
"Now do go slow.

I'm sure he doesn't see our car." And Pa says:  
"I dunno,

I think I don't need glasses yet, but really it may be

That I am blind and cannot see what's right in front of me."

If Pa should speed the car a bit some rigs to hurry past

Ma whispers: "Do be careful now. You're driving much too fast."

And all the time she's pointing out the dangers of the street

And keeps him posted on the roads where trolley cars he'll meet.

Last night when we got safely home, Pa sighed and said: "My dear,

I'm sure we've all enjoyed the drive you gave us from the rear!"

## ON GOING HOME FOR CHRISTMAS

He little knew the sorrow that was in his vacant chair;  
He never guessed they'd miss him, or he'd surely have been there;  
He couldn't see his mother or the lump that filled her throat,  
Or the tears that started falling as she read his hasty note;  
And he couldn't see his father, sitting sorrowful and dumb,  
Or he never would have written that he thought he couldn't come.

He little knew the gladness that his presence would have made,  
And the joy it would have given, or he never would have stayed.  
He didn't know how hungry had the little mother grown  
Once again to see her baby and to claim him for her own.  
He didn't guess the meaning of his visit Christmas Day  
Or he never would have written that he couldn't get away.

He couldn't see the fading of the cheeks that  
once were pink,

And the silver in the tresses; and he didn't  
stop to think

How the years are passing swiftly, and next  
Christmas it might be

There would be no home to visit and no mother  
dear to see.

He didn't think about it — I'll not say he didn't  
care.

He was heedless and forgetful or he'd surely  
have been there.

Are you going home for Christmas? Have you  
written you'll be there?

Going home to kiss the mother and to show  
her that you care?

Going home to greet the father in a way to  
make him glad?

If you're not I hope there'll never come a time  
you'll wish you had.

Just sit down and write a letter — it will make  
their heart strings hum

With a tune of perfect gladness — if you'll tell  
them that you'll come.

## AT SUGAR CAMP

At Sugar Camp the cook is kind  
And laughs the laugh we knew as boys;  
And there we slip away and find  
Awaiting us the old-time joys.  
The catbird calls the selfsame way  
She used to in the long ago,  
And there's a chorus all the day  
Of songsters it is good to know.

The killdeer in the distance cries;  
The thrasher, in her garb of brown,  
From tree to tree in gladness flies.  
Forgotten is the world's renown,  
Forgotten are the years we've known;  
At Sugar Camp there are no men;  
We've ceased to strive for things to own  
We're in the woods as boys again.

Our pride is in the strength of trees,  
Our pomp the pomp of living things;  
Our ears are tuned to melodies  
That every feathered songster sings.  
At Sugar Camp our noonday meal  
Is eaten in the open air,  
Where through the leaves the sunbeams steal  
And simple is our bill of fare.

At Sugar Camp in peace we dwell  
And none is boastful of himself;  
None plots to gain with shot and shell  
His neighbor's bit of land or pelf.  
The roar of cannon isn't heard,  
There stilled is money's tempting voice;  
Someone detects a new-come bird  
And at her presence all rejoice.

At Sugar Camp the cook is kind;  
His steak is broiling o'er the coals  
And in its sputtering we find  
Sweet harmony for tired souls.  
There, sheltered by the friendly trees,  
As boys we sit to eat our meal,  
And, brothers to the birds and bees,  
We hold communion with the real.

## HOME

It takes a heap o' livin' in a house t' make it home,  
A heap o' sun an' shadder, an' ye sometimes have t' roam  
Afore ye really 'preciate the things ye lef' behind,  
An' hunger fer 'em somehow, with 'em allus on yer mind.  
It don't make any differunce how rich ye get t' be,  
How much yer chairs an' tables cost, how great yer luxury;  
It ain't home t' ye, though it be the palace of a king,  
Until somehow yer soul is sort o' wrapped round everything.

Home ain't a place that gold can buy or get up in a minute;  
Afore it's home there's got t' be a heap o' livin' in it;  
Within the walls there's got t' be some babies born, and then  
Right there ye've got t' bring 'em up t' women good, an' men;  
And gradjerly, as time goes on, ye find ye wouldn't part

With anything they ever used — they've grown  
into yer heart:

The old high chairs, the playthings, too, the  
little shoes they wore

Ye hoard; an' if ye could ye'd keep the thumb-  
marks on the door.

Ye've got t' weep t' make it home, ye've got t'  
sit an' sigh

An' watch beside a loved one's bed, an' know  
that Death is nigh;

An' in the stillness o' the night t' see Death's  
angel come,

An' close the eyes o' her that smiled, an' leave  
her sweet voice dumb.

Fer these are scenes that grip the heart, an'  
when yer tears are dried,

Ye find the home is dearer than it was, an'  
sanctified;

An' tuggin' at ye always are the pleasant  
memories

O' her that was an' is no more — ye can't escape  
from these.

Ye've got t' sing an' dance fer years, ye've got  
t' romp an' play,

An' learn t' love the things ye have by usin' 'em  
each day;

Even the roses 'round the porch must blossom  
year by year

Afore they 'come a part o' ye, suggestin'  
someone dear  
Who used t' love 'em long ago, an' trained 'em  
jes' t' run  
The way they do, so's they would get the early  
mornin' sun;  
Ye've got t' love each brick an' stone from  
cellar up t' dome:  
It takes a heap o' livin' in a house t' make it  
home.

### THE PATH THAT LEADS TO HOME

The little path that leads to home,  
That is the road for me,  
I know no finer path to roam,  
With finer sights to see.  
With thoroughfares the world is lined  
That lead to wonders new,  
But he who treads them leaves behind  
The tender things and true.

Oh, north and south and east and west  
The crowded roadways go,  
And sweating brow and weary breast  
Are all they seem to know.  
And mad for pleasure some are bent,  
And some are seeking fame,

And some are sick with discontent,  
And some are bruised and lame.

Across the world the gleaming steel  
Holds out its lure for men,  
But no one finds his comfort real  
Till he comes home again.  
And charted lanes now line the sea  
For weary hearts to roam,  
But, Oh, the finest path to me  
Is that which leads to home.

'Tis there I come to laughing eyes  
And find a welcome true;  
'Tis there all care behind me lies  
And joy is ever new.  
And, Oh, when every day is done  
Upon that little street,  
A pair of rosy youngsters run  
To me with flying feet.

The world with myriad paths is lined  
But one alone for me,  
One little road where I may find  
The charms I want to see.  
Though thoroughfares majestic call  
The multitude to roam,  
I would not leave, to know them all,  
The path that leads to home.

## A FRIEND'S GREETING

I'd like to be the sort of friend that you have  
been to me;  
I'd like to be the help that you've been always  
glad to be;  
I'd like to mean as much to you each minute  
of the day  
As you have meant, old friend of mine, to me  
along the way.

I'd like to do the big things and the splendid  
things for you,  
To brush the gray from out your skies and  
leave them only blue;  
I'd like to say the kindly things that I so oft  
have heard,  
And feel that I could rouse your soul the way  
that mine you've stirred.

I'd like to give you back the joy that you have  
given me,  
Yet that were wishing you a need I hope will  
never be;  
I'd like to make you feel as rich as I, who  
travel on  
Undaunted in the darkest hours with you to  
lean upon.

I'm wishing at this Christmas time that I could  
but repay  
A portion of the gladness that you've strewn  
along my way;  
And could I have one wish this year, this only  
would it be:  
I'd like to be the sort of friend that you have  
been to me.

### A SONG

None knows the day that friends must part  
None knows how near is sorrow;  
If there be laughter in your heart,  
Don't hold it for to-morrow.  
Smile all the smiles you can to-day;  
Grief waits for all along the way.

To-day is ours for joy and mirth;  
We may be sad to-morrow;  
Then let us sing for all we're worth,  
Nor give a thought to sorrow.  
None knows what lies along the way;  
Let's smile what smiles we can to-day.

## OLD FRIENDS

I do not say new friends are not considerate and true,  
Or that their smiles ain't genuine, but still I'm tellin' you  
That when a feller's heart is crushed and achin' with the pain,  
And teardrops come a-splashin' down his cheeks like summer rain,  
Becoz his grief an' loneliness are more than he can bear,  
Somehow it's only old friends, then, that really seem to care.  
The friends who've stuck through thick an' thin, who've known you, good an' bad,  
Your faults an' virtues, an' have seen the struggles you have had,  
When they come to you gentle-like an' take your hand an' say:  
"Cheer up! we're with you still," it counts, for that's the old friends' way.

The new friends may be fond of you for what you are to-day;  
They've only known you rich, perhaps, an' only seen you gay;  
You can't tell what's attracted them; your station may appeal;

Perhaps they smile on you because you're doin'  
something real;  
But old friends who have seen you fail, an' also  
seen you win,  
Who've loved you either up or down, stuck  
to you, thick or thin,  
Who knew you as a budding youth, an' watched  
you start to climb,  
Through weal an' woe, still friends of yours  
an' constant all the time,  
When trouble comes an' things go wrong, I  
don't care what you say,  
They are the friends you'll turn to, for you  
want the old friends' way.

The new friends may be richer, an' more stylish,  
too, but when  
Your heart is achin' an' you think your sun  
won't shine again,  
It's not the riches of new friends you want, it's  
not their style,  
It's not the airs of grandeur then, it's just the  
old friend's smile,  
The old hand that has helped before, stretched  
out once more to you,  
The old words ringin' in your ears, so sweet an',  
Oh, so true!  
The tenderness of folks who know just what  
your sorrow means,

These are the things on which, somehow, your  
spirit always leans.  
When grief is poundin' at your breast — the  
new friends disappear  
An' to the old ones tried an' true, you turn for  
aid an' cheer.

## FOLKS

We was speakin' of folks, jes' common folks,  
An' we come to this conclusion,  
That wherever they be, on land or sea,  
They warm to a home allusion;  
That under the skin an' under the hide  
There's a spark that starts a-glowin'  
Whenever they look at a scene or book  
That something of home is showin'.

They may differ in creeds an' politics,  
They may argue an' even quarrel,  
But their throats grip tight, if they catch a  
sight  
Of their favorite elm or laurel.  
An' the winding lane that they used to tread  
With never a care to fret 'em,  
Or the pasture gate where they used to wait,  
Right under the skin will get 'em.

Now folks is folks on their different ways,  
With their different griefs an' pleasures,  
But the home they knew, when their years were  
few,

Is the dearest of all their treasures.  
An' the richest man to the poorest waif  
Right under the skin is brother  
When they stand an' sigh, with a tear-dimmed  
eye,  
At a thought of the dear old mother.

It makes no difference where it may be,  
Nor the fortunes that years may alter,  
Be they simple or wise, the old home ties  
Make all of 'em often falter.  
Time may robe 'em in sackcloth coarse  
Or garb 'em in gorgeous splendor,  
But whatever their lot, they keep one spot  
Down deep that is sweet an' tender.

We was speakin' of folks, jes' common folks,  
An' we come to this conclusion,  
That one an' all, be they great or small,  
Will warm to a home allusion;  
That under the skin an' the beaten hide  
They're kin in a real affection  
For the joys they knew, when their years were  
few,  
An' the home of their recollection.

## LITTLE MASTER MISCHIEVOUS

Little Master Mischievous, that's the name for  
you;  
There's no better title that describes the things  
you do:  
Into something all the while where you  
shouldn't be,  
Prying into matters that are not for you to see;  
Little Master Mischievous, order's overthrown  
If your mother leaves you for a minute all  
alone.

Little Master Mischievous, opening every door,  
Spilling books and papers round about the parlor  
floor,  
Scratching all the tables and marring all the  
chairs,  
Climbing where you shouldn't climb and tum-  
bling down the stairs.  
How'd you get the ink well? We can never  
guess.  
Now the rug is ruined; so's your little dress.

Little Master Mischievous, in the cookie jar,  
Who has ever told you where the cookies are?  
Now your sticky fingers smear the curtains  
white;  
You have finger-printed everything in sight.

There's no use in scolding; when you smile that  
way

You can rob of terror every word we say.

Little Master Mischievous, that's the name for  
you;

There's no better title that describes the things  
you do:

Prying into corners, peering into nooks,  
Tugging table covers, tearing costly books.

Little Master Mischievous, have your roguish  
way;

Time, I know, will stop you, soon enough some  
day.

## OPPORTUNITY

So long as men shall be on earth

There will be tasks for them to do,

Some way for them to show their worth;

Each day shall bring its problems new.

And men shall dream of mightier deeds

Than ever have been done before:

There always shall be human needs

For men to work and struggle for.

## THE SORROW TUGS

There's a lot of joy in the smiling world,  
    there's plenty of morning sun,  
And laughter and songs and dances, too, when-  
    ever the day's work's done;  
Full many an hour is a shining one, when  
    viewed by itself apart,  
But the golden threads in the warp of life are  
    the sorrow tugs at your heart.

Oh, the fun is froth and it blows away, and  
    many a joy's forgot,  
And the pleasures come and the pleasures go,  
    and memory holds them not;  
But treasured ever you keep the pain that causes  
    your tears to start,  
For the sweetest hours are the ones that bring  
    the sorrow tugs at your heart.

The lump in your throat and the little sigh when  
    your baby trudged away  
The very first time to the big red school — how  
    long will their memory stay?  
The fever days and the long black nights you  
    watched as she troubled, slept,  
And the joy you felt when she smiled once  
    more — how long will that all be kept?

The glad hours live in a feeble way, but the sad  
ones never die.

His first long trousers caused a pang and you  
saw them with a sigh.

And the big still house when the boy and girl,  
unto youth and beauty grown,  
To college went; will you e'er forget that first  
grim hour alone?

It seems as you look back over things, that all  
that you treasure dear

Is somehow blent in a wondrous way with a  
heart pang and a tear.

Though many a day is a joyous one when  
viewed by itself apart,

The golden threads in the warp of life are the  
sorrow tugs at your heart.

## ONLY A DAD

Only a dad with a tired face,  
Coming home from the daily race,  
Bringing little of gold or fame  
To show how well he has played the game;  
But glad in his heart that his own rejoice  
To see him come and to hear his voice.

Only a dad with a brood of four,  
One of ten million men or more  
Plodding along in the daily strife,  
Bearing the whips and the scorns of life,  
With never a whimper of pain or hate,  
For the sake of those who at home await.

Only a dad, neither rich nor proud,  
Merely one of the surging crowd,  
Toiling, striving from day to day,  
Facing whatever may come his way,  
Silent whenever the harsh condemn,  
And bearing it all for the love of them.

Only a dad but he gives his all,  
To smooth the way for his children small,  
Doing with courage stern and grim  
The deeds that his father did for him.  
This is the line that for him I pen:  
Only a dad, but the best of men.

## HARD KNOCKS

I'm not the man to say that failure's sweet,  
Nor tell a chap to laugh when things go  
wrong;

I know it hurts to have to take defeat  
An' no one likes to lose before a throng;  
It isn't very pleasant not to win  
When you have done the very best you could;  
But if you're down, get up an' buckle in—  
A lickin' often does a fellow good.

I've seen some chaps who never knew their  
power  
Until somebody knocked 'em to the floor;  
I've known men who discovered in an hou'  
A courage they had never shown before.  
I've seen 'em rise from failure to the top  
By doin' things they hadn't understood  
Before the day disaster made 'em drop—  
A lickin' often does a fellow good.

Success is not the teacher, wise an' true,  
That gruff old failure is, remember that;  
She's much too apt to make a fool of you,  
Which isn't true of blows that knock you flat.  
Hard knocks are painful things an' hard to bear,  
An' most of us would dodge 'em if we could;  
There's something mighty broadening in care—  
A lickin' often does a fellow good.

## SPRING IN THE TRENCHES

It's coming time for planting in that little patch  
of ground,  
Where the lad and I made merry as he followed  
me around;  
Now the sun is getting higher, and the skies  
above are blue,  
And I'm hungry for the garden, and I wish the  
war was through.  
But it's tramp, tramp, tramp,  
And it's never look behind,  
And when you see a stranger's kids  
Pretend that you are blind.

The spring is coming back again, the birds  
begin to mate;  
The skies are full of kindness, but the world is  
full of hate.  
And it's I that should be bending now in peace  
above the soil  
With laughing eyes and little hands about to  
bless the toil.  
But it's fight, fight, fight,  
And it's charge at double-quick;  
A soldier thinking thoughts of home  
Is one more soldier sick.

Last year I brought the bulbs to bloom and  
saw the roses bud;

This year I'm ankle deep in mire, and most of  
it is blood.

Last year the mother in the door was glad as  
she could be;

To-day her heart is full of pain, and mine is  
hurting me.

But it's shoot, shoot, shoot,

And when the bullets hiss,

Don't let the tears fill up your eyes,

For weeping soldiers miss.

Oh, who will tend the roses now and who will  
sow the seeds?

And who will do the heavy work the little  
garden needs?

And who will tell the lad of mine the things  
he wants to know,

And take his hand and lead him round the  
paths we used to go?

For it's charge, charge, charge,

And it's face the foe once more;

Forget the things you love the most

And keep your mind on gore.

## FATHER

Used to wonder just why father  
    Never had much time for play,  
Used to wonder why he'd rather  
    Work each minute of the day.  
Used to wonder why he never  
    Loafed along the road an' shirked;  
Can't recall a time whenever  
    Father played while others worked.

Father didn't dress in fashion,  
    Sort of hated clothing new;  
Style with him was not a passion;  
    He had other things in view.  
Boys are blind to much that's going  
    On about 'em day by day,  
And I had no way of knowing  
    What became of father's pay.

All I knew was when I needed  
    Shoes I got 'em on the spot;  
Everything for which I pleaded,  
    Somehow, father always got.  
Wondered, season after season,  
    Why he never took a rest,  
And that *I* might be the reason  
    Then I never even guessed.

Father set a store on knowledge;  
If he'd lived to have his way  
He'd have sent me off to college  
And the bills been glad to pay.  
That, I know, was his ambition:  
Now and then he used to say  
He'd have done his earthly mission  
On my graduation day.

Saw his cheeks were getting paler,  
Didn't understand just why;  
Saw his body growing frailer,  
Then at last I saw him die.  
Rest had come! His tasks were ended,  
Calm was written on his brow;  
Father's life was big and splendid,  
And I understand it now.

## LADDIES

Show me the boy who never threw  
A stone at someone's cat,  
Or never hurled a snowball swift  
At someone's high silk hat—  
Who never ran away from school,  
To seek the swimming hole,  
Or slyly from a neighbor's yard  
Green apples never stole—

Show me the boy who never broke  
A pane of window glass,  
Who never disobeyed the sign  
That says: "Keep off the grass."  
Who never did a thousand things,  
That grieve us sore to tell,  
And I'll show you a little boy  
Who must be far from well.

## THE LIVING BEAUTIES

I never knew, until they went,  
How much their laughter really meant.  
I never knew how much the place  
Depended on each little face;  
How barren home could be and drear  
Without its living beauties here.

I never knew that chairs and books  
Could wear such sad and solemn looks!  
That rooms and halls could be at night  
So still and drained of all delight.  
This home is now but brick and board  
Where bits of furniture are stored.

I used to think I loved each shelf  
And room for what it was itself.  
And once I thought each picture fine  
Because I proudly called it mine.  
But now I know they mean no more  
Than art works hanging in a store.

Until they went away to roam  
I never knew what made it home.  
But I have learned that all is base,  
However wonderful the place  
And decked with costly treasures, rare,  
Unless the living joys are there.

## AT BREAKFAST TIME

My Pa he eats his breakfast in a funny sort of way:

We hardly ever see him at the first meal of the day.

Ma puts his food before him and he settles in his place

An' then he props the paper up and we can't see his face;

We hear him blow his coffee and we hear him chew his toast,

But it's for the morning paper that he seems to care the most.

Ma says that little children mighty grateful ought to be

To the folks that fixed the evening as the proper time for tea.

She says if meals were only served to people once a day,

An' that was in the morning just before Pa goes away,

We'd never know how father looked when he was in his place,

Coz he'd always have the morning paper stuck before his face.

He drinks his coffee steamin' hot, an' passes  
Ma his cup

To have it filled a second time, an' never once  
looks up.

He never has a word to say, but just sits there  
an' reads,

An' when she sees his hand stuck out Ma gives  
him what he needs.

She guesses what it is he wants, coz it's no use  
to ask:

Pa's got to read his paper an' sometimes that's  
quite a task.

One morning we had breakfast an' his features  
we could see,

But his face was long an' solemn an' he didn't  
speak to me,

An' we couldn't get him laughin' an' we couldn't  
make him smile,

An' he said the toast was soggy an' the coffee  
simply vile.

Then Ma said: "What's the matter? Why are  
you so cross an' glum?"

An' Pa 'most took her head off coz the paper  
didn't come.

## CAN'T

*Can't* is the worst word that's written or spoken;

Doing more harm here than slander and lies;  
On it is many a strong spirit broken,

And with it many a good purpose dies.  
It springs from the lips of the thoughtless each morning

And robs us of courage we need through the day:

It rings in our ears like a timely-sent warning  
And laughs when we falter and fall by the way.

*Can't* is the father of feeble endeavor,  
The parent of terror and half-hearted work;  
It weakens the efforts of artisans clever,  
And makes of the toiler an indolent shirk.  
It poisons the soul of the man with a vision,  
It stifles in infancy many a plan;  
It greets honest toiling with open derision  
And mocks at the hopes and the dreams of a man.

*Can't* is a word none should speak without blushing;

To utter it should be a symbol of shame;  
Ambition and courage it daily is crushing;

It blights a man's purpose and shortens his aim.

Despise it with all of your hatred of error;  
Refuse it the lodgment it seeks in your brain;  
Arm against it as a creature of terror,  
And all that you dream of you some day shall gain.

*Can't* is the word that is foe to ambition,  
An enemy ambushed to shatter your will;  
Its prey is forever the man with a mission  
And bows but to courage and patience and skill.  
Hate it, with hatred that's deep and undying,  
For once it is welcomed 'twill break any man;

Whatever the goal you are seeking, keep trying  
And answer this demon by saying: "I *can.*"

## JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY

*Written July 22, 1916, when the  
world lost its "Poet of Childhood."*

There must be great rejoicin' on the Golden  
Shore to-day,  
An' the big an' little angels must be feelin'  
mighty gay:  
Could we look beyond the curtain now I fancy  
we should see  
Old Aunt Mary waitin', smilin', for the coming  
that's to be,  
An' Little Orphant Annie an' the whole excited  
pack  
Dancin' up an' down an' shoutin': "Mr. Riley's  
comin' back!"

There's a heap o' real sadness in this good old  
world to-day;  
There are lumpy throats this morning now that  
Riley's gone away;  
There's a voice now stilled forever that in  
sweetness only spoke  
An' whispered words of courage with a faith that  
never broke.  
There is much of joy and laughter that we  
mortals here will lack,  
But the angels must be happy now that Riley's  
comin' back.

The world was gettin' dreary, there was too  
much sigh an' frown  
In this vale o' mortal strivin', so God sent Jim  
Riley down,  
An' He said: "Go there an' cheer 'em in your  
good old-fashioned way,  
With your songs of tender sweetness, but don't  
make your plans to stay,  
Coz you're needed up in Heaven. I am lendin'  
you to men  
Just to help 'em with your music, but I'll want  
you back again."

An' Riley came, an' mortals heard the music of  
his voice  
An' they caught his songs o' beauty an' they  
started to rejoice;  
An' they leaned on him in sorrow, an' they  
shared with him their joys,  
An' they walked with him the pathways that  
they knew when they were boys.  
But the heavenly angels missed him, missed his  
tender, gentle knack  
Of makin' people happy, an' they wanted Riley  
back.

There must be great rejoicin' on the streets of  
Heaven to-day  
An' all the angel children must be troopin'  
down the way,

Singin' heavenly songs of welcome an' preparin' now to greet  
The soul that God had tinctured with an everlasting sweet;  
The world is robed in sadness an' is draped in sombre black;  
But joy must reign in Heaven now that Riley's comin' back.

## RESULTS AND ROSES

The man who wants a garden fair,  
Or small or very big,  
With flowers growing here and there,  
Must bend his back and dig.

The things are mighty few on earth  
That wishes can attain.  
Whate'er we want of any worth  
We've got to work to gain.

It matters not what goal you seek  
Its secret here reposes:  
You've got to dig from week to week  
To get Results or Roses.

## THE OTHER FELLOW

Are you fond of your wife and your children  
fair?

So is the other fellow.

Do you crave pleasures for them to share?  
So does the other fellow.

Does your heart rejoice when your own are  
glad?

And are you troubled when they are sad?

Well, it's that way, too, in this life, my lad,  
That way with the other fellow.

Do you want the best for your own to know?  
So does the other fellow.

Do you stoop to kiss them before you go?  
So does the other fellow.

When your baby lies on a fevered bed,  
Does your heart run cold with a silent dread?

Well, it's that way, too, where all mortals tread—  
That way with the other fellow.

Does it hurt when they want what you cannot  
buy?

It does with the other fellow.

Do you for their comfort yourself deny?  
So does the other fellow.

Would you wail aloud if your babe should die  
For the lack of care you could not supply?

Well, it's that way, too, as he travels by,  
That way with the other fellow.

## OUR DUTY TO OUR FLAG

Less hate and greed  
Is what we need  
And more of service true;  
More men to love  
The flag above  
And keep it first in view.

Less boast and brag  
About the flag,  
More faith in what it means;  
More heads erect,  
More self-respect,  
Less talk of war machines.

The time to fight  
To keep it bright  
Is not along the way,  
Nor 'cross the foam,  
But here at home  
Within ourselves — to-day.

'Tis we must love  
That flag above  
With all our might and main;  
For from our hands,  
Not distant lands,  
Shall come dishonor's stain.

If that flag be  
Dishonored, we  
Have done it, not the foe;  
If it shall fall  
We first of all  
Shall be to strike a blow.

### THE HUNTER

Cheek that is tanned to the wind of the north,  
Body that jests at the bite of the cold,  
Limbs that are eager and strong to go forth  
    Into the wilds and the ways of the bold;  
Red blood that pulses and throbs in the veins,  
Ears that love silences better than noise;  
Strength of the forest and health of the plains:  
    These the rewards that the hunter enjoys.

Forests were ever the cradles of men;  
Manhood is born of a kinship with trees.  
Whence shall come brave hearts and stout  
    muscles, when  
Woods have made way for our cities of ease?  
Oh, do you wonder that stalwarts return  
    Yearly to hark to the whispering oaks?  
'Tis for the brave days of old that they yearn:  
    These are the splendors the hunter invokes.

## IT'S SEPTEMBER

It's September, and the orchards are afire with  
red and gold,  
And the nights with dew are heavy, and the  
morning's sharp with cold;  
Now the garden's at its gayest with the salvia  
blazing red  
And the good old-fashioned asters laughing  
at us from their bed;  
Once again in shoes and stockings are the chil-  
dren's little feet,  
And the dog now does his snoozing on the  
bright side of the street.

It's September, and the cornstalks are as high  
as they will go,  
And the red cheeks of the apples everywhere  
begin to show;  
Now the supper's scarcely over ere the dark-  
ness settles down  
And the moon looms big and yellow at the  
edges of the town;  
Oh, it's good to see the children, when their  
little prayers are said,  
Duck beneath the patchwork covers when they  
tumble into bed.

It's September, and a calmness and a sweetness  
    seem to fall  
Over everything that's living, just as though it  
    hears the call  
Of Old Winter, trudging slowly, with his pack  
    of ice and snow,  
In the distance over yonder, and it somehow  
    seems as though  
Every tiny little blossom wants to look its very  
    best  
When the frost shall bite its petals and it droops  
    away to rest.

It's September! It's the fullness and the ripe-  
    ness of the year;  
All the work of earth is finished, or the final  
    tasks are near,  
But there is no doleful wailing; every living  
    thing that grows,  
For the end that is approaching wears the  
    finest garb it knows.  
And I pray that I may proudly hold my head  
    up high and smile  
When I come to my September in the golden  
    afterwhile.

## HOW DO YOU TACKLE YOUR WORK?

How do you tackle your work each day?  
Are you scared of the job you find?  
Do you grapple the task that comes your way  
With a confident, easy mind?  
Do you stand right up to the work ahead  
Or fearfully pause to view it?  
Do you start to toil with a sense of dread  
Or feel that you're going to do it?

You can do as much as you think you can,  
But you'll never accomplish more;  
If you're afraid of yourself, young man,  
There's little for you in store.  
For failure comes from the inside first,  
It's there if we only knew it,  
And you can win, though you face the worst,  
If you feel that you're going to do it.

Success! It's found in the soul of you,  
And not in the realm of luck!  
The world will furnish the work to do,  
But you must provide the pluck.  
You can do whatever you think you can,  
It's all in the way you view it.  
It's all in the start that you make, young man:  
You must feel that you're going to do it.

How do you tackle your work each day?  
With confidence clear, or dread?  
What to yourself do you stop and say  
When a new task lies ahead?  
What is the thought that is in your mind?  
Is fear ever running through it?  
If so, just tackle the next you find  
By thinking you're going to do it.

## LIFE

Life is a gift to be used every day,  
Not to be smothered and hidden away;  
It isn't a thing to be stored in the chest  
Where you gather your keepsakes and treasure  
your best;  
It isn't a joy to be sipped now and then  
And promptly put back in a dark place again.

Life is a gift that the humblest may boast of  
And one that the humblest may well make the  
most of.

Get out and live it each hour of the day,  
Wear it and use it as much as you may;  
Don't keep it in niches and corners and grooves,  
You'll find that in service its beauty improves.

## STORY TELLING

Most every night when they're in bed,  
And both their little prayers have said,  
They shout for me to come upstairs  
And tell them tales of grizzly bears,  
And Indians and gypsies bold,  
And eagles with the claws that hold  
A baby's weight, and fairy sprites  
That roam the woods on starry nights.

And I must illustrate these tales,  
Must imitate the northern gales  
That toss the Indian's canoe,  
And show the way he paddles, too.  
If in the story comes a bear,  
I have to pause and sniff the air  
And show the way he climbs the trees  
To steal the honey from the bees.

And then I buzz like angry bees  
And sting him on his nose and knees  
And howl in pain, till mother cries:  
“ That pair will never shut their eyes,  
While all that noise up there you make;  
You're simply keeping them awake.”  
And then they whisper: “ Just one more,”  
And once again I'm forced to roar.

New stories every night they ask,  
And that is not an easy task;  
I have to be so many things,  
The frog that croaks, the lark that sings,  
The cunning fox, the frightened hen;  
But just last night they stumped me, when  
They wanted me to twist and squirm  
And imitate an angle worm.

At last they tumble off to sleep,  
And softly from their room I creep  
And brush and comb the shock of hair  
I tossed about to be a bear.  
Then mother says: "Well, I should say  
You're just as much a child as they."  
But you can bet I'll not resign  
That story telling job of mine.

## CANNING TIME

There's a wondrous smell of spices  
In the kitchen,  
Most bewitchin';  
There are fruits cut into slices  
That just set the palate itchin';  
There's the sound of spoon on platter  
And the rattle and the clatter;  
And a bunch of kids are hastin'  
To the splendid joy of tastin':  
It's the fragrant time of year  
When fruit-cannin' days are here.

There's a good wife gayly smilin'  
And perspirin'  
Some, and tirin';  
And while jar on jar she's pilin'  
And the necks o' them she's wirin'  
I'm a-sittin' here an' dreamin'  
Of the kettles that are steamin',  
And the cares that have been troublin'  
All have vanished in the bubblin'.  
I am happy that I'm here  
At the cannin' time of year.

Lord, I'm sorry for the feller  
That is missin'  
All the hissin'  
Of the juices, red and yeller,

And can never sit and listen  
To the rattle and the clatter  
Of the sound of spoon on platter.  
I am sorry for the single,  
For they miss the thrill and tingle  
Of the splendid time of year  
When the cannin' days are here.

### THE DULL ROAD

It's the dull road that leads to the gay road;  
The practice that leads to success;  
The work road that leads to the play road;  
It is trouble that breeds happiness.

It's the hard work and merciless grinding  
That purchases glory and fame;  
It's repeatedly doing, nor minding  
The drudgery drear of the game.

It's the passing up glamor or pleasure  
For the sake of the skill we may gain,  
And in giving up comfort or leisure  
For the joy that we hope to attain.

It's the hard road of trying and learning,  
Of toiling, uncheered and alone,  
That wins us the prizes worth earning,  
And leads us to goals we would own.

## THE APPLE TREE

When an apple tree is ready for the world to come and eat,  
There isn't any structure in the land that's "got it beat."  
There's nothing man has builded with the beauty or the charm  
That can touch the simple grandeur of the monarch of the farm.  
There's never any picture from a human being's brush  
That has ever caught the redness of a single apple's blush.

When an apple tree's in blossom it is glorious to see,  
But that's just a hint, at springtime, of the better things to be;  
That is just a fairy promise from the Great Magician's wand  
Of the wonders and the splendors that are waiting just beyond  
The distant edge of summer; just a forecast of the treat  
When the apple tree is ready for the world to come and eat.

Architects of splendid vision long have labored  
on the earth,  
And have raised their dreams in marble and  
we've marveled at their worth;  
Long the spires of costly churches have looked  
upward at the sky;  
Rich in promise and in the beauty, they have  
cheered the passer-by.  
But I'm sure there's nothing finer for the eye  
of man to meet  
Than an apple tree that's ready for the world  
to come and eat.

There's the promise of the apples, red and  
gleaming in the sun,  
Like the medals worn by mortals as rewards  
for labors done;  
And the big arms stretched wide open, with a  
welcome warm and true  
In a way that sets you thinking it's intended  
just for you.  
There is nothing with a beauty so entrancing,  
so complete,  
As an apple tree that's ready for the world to  
come and eat.

## THE HOME-TOWN

Some folks leave home for money  
And some leave home for fame,  
Some seek skies always sunny,  
And some depart in shame.  
I care not what the reason  
Men travel east or west,  
Or what the month or season —  
The home-town is the best.

The home-town is the glad town  
Where something real abides;  
'Tis not the money-mad town  
That all its spirit hides.  
Though strangers scoff and flout it  
And even jeer its name,  
It has a charm about it  
No other town can claim.

The home-town skies seem bluer  
Than skies that stretch away.  
The home-town friends seem truer  
And kinder through the day;  
And whether glum or cheery  
Light-hearted or depressed,  
Or struggle-fit or weary,  
I like the home-town best.

Let him who will, go wander  
To distant towns to live,  
Of some things I am fonder  
Than all they have to give.  
The gold of distant places  
Could not repay me quite  
For those familiar faces  
That keep the home-town bright.

### TAKE HOME A SMILE

Take home a smile; forget the petty cares,  
The dull, grim grind of all the day's affairs;  
The day is done, come be yourself awhile:  
To-night, to those who wait, take home a smile.

Take home a smile; don't scatter grief and gloom  
Where laughter and light hearts should always  
bloom;  
What though you've traveled many a dusty mile,  
Footsore and weary, still take home a smile.

Take home a smile—it is not much to do,  
But much it means to them who wait for you;  
You can be brave for such a little while;  
The day of doubt is done—take home a smile.

## COURAGE

Courage isn't a brilliant dash,  
A daring deed in a moment's flash;  
It isn't an instantaneous thing  
Born of despair with a sudden spring  
It isn't a creature of flickered hope  
Or the final tug at a slipping rope;  
But it's something deep in the soul of man  
That is working always to serve some plan.

Courage isn't the last resort  
In the work of life or the game of sport;  
It isn't a thing that a man can call  
At some future time when he's apt to fall;  
If he hasn't it now, he will have it not  
When the strain is great and the pace is hot.  
For who would strive for a distant goal  
Must always have courage within his soul.

Courage isn't a dazzling light  
That flashes and passes away from sight;  
It's a slow, unwavering, ingrained trait  
With the patience to work and the strength to  
wait.  
It's part of a man when his skies are blue,  
It's part of him when he has work to do.  
The brave man never is freed of it.  
He has it when there is no need of it.

Courage was never designed for show;  
It isn't a thing that can come and go;  
It's written in victory and defeat  
And every trial a man may meet.  
It's part of his hours, his days and his years,  
Back of his smiles and behind his tears.  
Courage is more than a daring deed:  
It's the breath of life and a strong man's creed.

## GREATNESS

We can be great by helping one another;  
We can be loved for very simple deeds:  
Who has the grateful mention of a brother  
Has really all the honor that he needs.

We can be famous for our works of kindness—  
Fame is not born alone of strength or skill;  
It sometimes comes from deafness and from  
blindness  
To petty words and faults, and loving still.

We can be rich in gentle smiles and sunny:  
A jeweled soul exceeds a royal crown.  
The richest men sometimes have little money,  
And Croesus oft's the poorest man in town.

## THE EPICURE

I've sipped a rich man's sparkling wine,  
His silverware I've handled.

I've placed these battered legs of mine  
'Neath tables gayly candled.

I dine on rare and costly fare  
Whene'er good fortune lets me,

But there's no meal that can compare  
With those the missus gets me.

I've had your steaks three inches thick  
With all your Sam Ward trimming,  
I've had the breast of milk-fed chick  
In luscious gravy swimming.

To dine in swell *café* or club  
But irritates and frets me;  
Give me the plain and wholesome grub —  
The grub the missus gets me.

Two kiddies smiling at the board,  
The cook right at the table,

The four of us, a hungry horde,  
To beat that none is able.

A big meat pie, with flaky crust!  
'Tis then that joy besets me;

Oh, I could eat until I "bust,"  
Those meals the missus gets me.

## THE GENTLE GARDENER

I'd like to leave but daffodills to mark my little  
way,

To leave but tulips red and white behind me as  
I stray;

I'd like to pass away from earth and feel I'd  
left behind

But roses and forget-me-nots for all who come  
to find.

I'd like to sow the barren spots with all the  
flowers of earth,

To leave a path where those who come should  
find but gentle mirth;

And when at last I'm called upon to join the  
heavenly throng

I'd like to feel along my way I'd left no sign  
of wrong.

And yet the cares are many and the hours of  
toil are few;

There is not time enough on earth for all I'd  
like to do;

But, having lived and having toiled, I'd like the  
world to find

Some little touch of beauty that my soul had  
left behind.

## THE FINEST AGE

When he was only nine months old,  
And plump and round and pink of cheek.  
A joy to tickle and to hold,  
Before he'd even learned to speak,  
His gentle mother used to say:  
"It is too bad that he must grow.  
If I could only have my way  
His baby ways we'd always know."

And then the year was ti ed, and he  
Began to toddle round the floor  
And name the things that he could see  
And soil the dresses that he wore.  
Then many a night she whispered low:  
"Our baby now is such a joy  
I hate to think that he must grow  
To be a wild and heedless boy."

But on he went and sweeter grew,  
And then his mother, I recall,  
Wished she could keep him always two,  
For that's the finest age of all.  
She thought the selfsame thing at three,  
And now that he is four, she sighs  
To think he cannot always be  
The youngster with the laughing eyes.

Oh, little boy, my wish is not  
Always to keep you four years old.  
Each night I stand beside your cot  
And think of what the years may hold;  
And looking down on you I pray  
That when we've lost our baby small,  
The mother of our man will say  
"This is the finest age of all."

## SUCCESS AND FAILURE

I do not think all failure's undeserved,  
And all success is merely someone's luck;  
Some men are down because they were unnerved,  
And some are up because they kept their pluck.  
Some men are down because they chose to shirk;  
Some men are high because they did their work.

I do not think that all the poor are good,  
That riches are the uniform of shame;  
The beggar might have conquered if he would,  
And that he begs, the world is not to blame.  
Misfortune is not all that comes to mar;  
Most men, themselves, have shaped the things  
they are.

## CARE-FREE YOUTH

The skies are blue and the sun is out and the  
grass is green and soft  
And the old charm's back in the apple tree  
and it calls a boy aloft;  
And the same low voice that the old don't hear,  
but the care-free youngsters do,  
Is calling them to the fields and streams and  
the joys that once I knew.  
And if youth be wild desire for play and care  
is the mark of men,  
Beneath the skin that Time has tanned I'm a  
madcap youngster then.

Far richer than king with his crown of gold and  
his heavy weight of care  
Is the sunburned boy with his stone-bruised feet  
and his tousled shock of hair;  
For the king can hear but the cry of hate or the  
sickly sound of praise,  
And lost to him are the voices sweet that called  
in his boyhood days.  
Far better than ruler, with pomp and power  
and riches, is it to be  
The urchin gay in his tattered clothes that is  
climbing the apple tree.

Oh, once I heard all the calls that come to the  
quick, glad ears of boys,

And a certain spot on the river bank told me of  
its many joys,  
And certain fields and certain trees were loyal  
friends to me,  
And I knew the birds, and I owned a dog, and  
we both could hear and see.  
Oh, never from tongues of men have dropped  
such messages wholly glad  
As the things that live in the great outdoors  
once told to a little lad.

And I'm sorry for him who cannot hear what  
the tall trees have to say,  
Who is deaf to the call of a running stream  
and the lanes that lead to play.  
The boy that shins up the faithful elm or  
sprawls on a river bank  
Is more richly blessed with the joys of life than  
any old man of rank.  
For youth is the golden time of life, and this  
battered old heart of mine  
Beats fast to the march of its old-time joys,  
when the sun begins to shine.

## MY PAW SAID SO

Foxes can talk if you know how to listen,  
My Paw said so.

Owls have big eyes that sparkle an' glisten,  
My Paw said so.

Bears can turn flip-flaps an' climb ellum trees,  
An' steal all the honey away from the bees,  
An' they never mind winter becoz they don't  
freeze;

My Paw said so.

Girls is a-scared of a snake, but boys ain't,  
My Paw said so.

They holler an' run; an' sometimes they faint,  
My Paw said so.

But boys would be 'shamed to be frightened  
that way

When all that the snake wants to do is to play;  
You've got to believe every word that I say,  
My Paw said so.

Wolves ain't so bad if you treat 'em all right,  
My Paw said so.

They're as fond of a game as they are of a fight,  
My Paw said so.

An' all of the animals found in the wood  
Ain't always ferocious. Most times they are  
good.

The trouble is mostly they're misunderstood,  
My Paw said so.

You can think what you like, but I stick to it  
when

My Paw said so.

An' I'll keep right on sayin', again an' again,  
My Paw said so.

Maybe foxes don't talk to such people as you,  
An' bears never show you the tricks they can do,  
But I know that the stories I'm tellin' are true,  
My Paw said so.

## LIFE'S TESTS

If never a sorrow came to us, and never a care  
we knew;

If every hope were realized, and every dream  
came true;

If only joy were found on earth, and no one  
ever sighed,

And never a friend proved false to us, and never  
a loved one died,

And never a burden bore us down, soul-sick and  
weary, too,

We'd yearn for tests to prove our worth and  
tasks for us to do.

## THE PEACEFUL WARRIORS

Let others sing their songs of war  
And chant their hymns of splendid death,  
Let others praise the soldiers' ways  
And hail the cannon's flaming breath.  
Let others sing of Glory's fields  
Where blood for Victory is paid,  
I choose to sing some simple thing  
To those who wield not gun or blade —  
The peaceful warriors of trade.

Let others choose the deeds of war  
For symbols of our nation's skill,  
The blood-red coat, the rattling throat,  
The regiment that charged the hill,  
The boy who died to serve the flag,  
Who heard the order and obeyed,  
But leave to me the gallantry  
Of those who labor unafraid —  
The peaceful warriors of trade.

Aye, let me sing the splendid deeds  
Of those who toil to serve mankind,  
The men who break old ways and make  
New paths for those who come behind.  
The young who war with customs old  
And face their problems, unafraid,  
Who think and plan to lift for man  
The burden that on him is laid —  
The splendid warriors of trade.

I sing of battles with disease  
And victories o'er death and pain,  
Of ships that fly the summer sky,  
And glorious deeds of strength and brain.  
The call for help that rings through space  
By which a vessel's course is stayed,  
Thrills me far more than fields of gore,  
Or heroes decked in golden braid —  
I sing the warriors of trade.

## FAILURES

'Tis better to have tried in vain,  
Sincerely striving for a goal,  
Than to have lived upon the plain  
An idle and a timid soul.

'Tis better to have fought and spent  
Your courage, missing all applause,  
Than to have lived in smug content  
And never ventured for a cause.

For he who tries and fails may be  
The founder of a better day;  
Though never his the victory,  
From him shall others learn the way.

## RAISIN PIE

There's a heap of pent-up goodness in the yellow  
bantam corn,  
And I sort o' like to linger round a berry patch  
at morn;  
Oh, the Lord has set our table with a stock o'  
things to eat  
An' there's just enough o' bitter in the blend  
to cut the sweet,  
But I run the whole list over, an' it seems  
somehow that I  
Find the keenest sort o' pleasure in a chunk  
o' raisin pie.

There are pies that start the water circulatin' in  
the mouth;  
There are pies that wear the flavor of the warm  
an' sunny south;  
Some with oriental spices spur the drowsy appe-  
tite  
An' just fill a fellow's being with a thrill o'  
real delight;  
But for downright solid goodness that comes  
drippin' from the sky  
There is nothing quite the equal of a chunk o'  
raisin pie.

I'm admittin' tastes are diff'runt, I'm not settin'  
up myself

As the judge an' final critic of the good things  
on the shelf.  
I'm just sort o' payin' tribute to a simple joy on  
earth,  
Sort o' feebly testifyin' to its lasting charm an'  
worth,  
An' I'll hold to this conclusion till it comes my  
time to die,  
That there's no dessert that's finer than a chunk  
o' raisin pie.

## PREPAREDNESS

Right must not live in idleness,  
Nor dwell in smug content;  
It must be strong, against the throng  
Of foes, on evil bent.

Justice must not a weakling be  
But it must guard its own,  
And live each day, that none can say  
Justice is overthrown.

Peace, the sweet glory of the world,  
Faces a duty, too;  
Death is her fate, leaves she one gate  
For war to enter through.

## THE READY ARTISTS

The green is in the meadow and the blue is in  
the sky,  
And all of Nature's artists have their colors  
handy by;  
With a few days bright with sunshine and a  
few nights free from frost  
They will start to splash their colors quite  
regardless of the cost.  
There's an artist waiting ready at each bleak  
and dismal spot  
To paint the flashing tulip or the meek forget-  
me-not.

May is lurking in the distance and her lap is  
filled with flowers,  
And the choicest of her blossoms very shortly  
will be ours.  
There is not a lane so dreary or a field so dark  
with gloom  
But that soon will be resplendent with its little  
touch of bloom.  
There's an artist keen and eager to make beau-  
tiful each scene  
And remove with colors gorgeous every trace of  
of what has been.

Oh, the world is now in mourning; round about  
us all are spread

The ruins and the symbols of the winter that  
is dead.

But the bleak and barren picture very shortly  
now will pass,

For the halls of life are ready for their velvet  
rugs of grass;

And the painters now are waiting with their  
magic to replace

This dullness with a beauty that no mortal hand  
can trace.

The green is in the meadow and the blue is in  
the sky;

The chill of death is passing, life will shortly  
greet the eye.

We shall revel soon in colors only Nature's  
artists make

And the humblest plant that's sleeping unto  
beauty shall awake.

For there's not a leaf forgotten, not a twig  
neglected there,

And the tiniest of pansies shall the royal purple  
wear.

## THE HAPPIEST DAYS

You do not know it, little man,  
In your summer coat of tan  
And your legs bereft of hose  
And your peeling, sunburned nose,  
With a stone bruise on your toe,  
Almost limping as you go  
Running on your way to play  
Through another summer day,  
Friend of birds and streams and trees,  
That your happiest days are these.

Little do you think to-day,  
As you hurry to your play,  
That a lot of us, grown old  
In the chase for fame and gold,  
Watch you as you pass along  
Gayly whistling bits of song,  
And in envy sit and dream  
Of a long-neglected stream,  
Where long buried are the joys  
We possessed when we were boys.

Little chap, you cannot guess  
All your sum of happiness;  
Little value do you place  
On your sunburned freckled face;

And if some shrewd fairy came  
Offering sums of gold and fame  
For your summer days of play,  
You would barter them away  
And believe that you had made  
There and then a clever trade.

Time was we were boys like you,  
Bare of foot and sunburned, too,  
And, like you, we never guessed  
All the riches we possessed;  
We'd have traded them back then  
For the hollow joys of men;  
We'd have given them all to be  
Rich and wise and forty-three.  
For life never teaches boys  
Just how precious are their joys.

Youth has fled and we are old.  
Some of us have fame and gold;  
Some of us are sorely scarred,  
For the way of age is hard;  
And we envy, little man,  
You your splendid coat of tan,  
Envy you your treasures rare,  
Hours of joy beyond compare;  
For we know, by teaching stern,  
All that some day you must learn.

## THE REAL BAIT

To gentle ways I am inclined;  
I have no wish to kill.  
To creatures dumb I would be kind;  
I like them all, but still  
Right now I think I'd like to be  
Beside some rippling brook,  
And grab a worm I'd brought with me  
And slip him on a hook.

I'd like to put my hand once more  
Into a rusty can  
And turn those squirming creatures c'er  
Like nuggets in a pan;  
And for a big one, once again,  
With eager eyes I'd look,  
As did a boy I knew, and then  
Impale it on a hook.

I've had my share of fishing joy,  
I've fished with patent bait,  
With chub and minnow, but the boy  
Is lord of sport's estate.  
And no such pleasure comes to man  
So rare as when he took  
A worm from a tomato can  
And slipped it on a hook.

I'd like to gaze with glowing eyes  
Upon that precious bait,  
To view each fat worm as a prize  
To be accounted great.  
And though I've passed from boyhood's term,  
And opened age's book,  
I still would like to put a worm  
That wriggled on a hook.

### TRUE NOBILITY

Who does his task from day to day  
And meets whatever comes his way,  
Believing God has willed it so,  
Has found real greatness here below.

Who guards his post, no matter where,  
Believing God must need him there,  
Although but lowly toil it be,  
Has risen to nobility.

For great and low there's but one test:  
'Tis that each man shall do his best.  
Who works with all the strength he can  
Shall never die in debt to man.

## THE SULKERS

The world's too busy now to pause  
To listen to a whiner's cause;  
It has no time to stop and pet  
The sulker in a peevish fret,  
Who wails he'll neither work nor play  
Because things haven't gone his way.

The world keeps plodding right along  
And gives its favors right or wrong  
To all who have the grit to work  
Regardless of the fool or shirk.  
The world says this to every man:  
"Go out and do the best you can."

The world's too busy to implore  
The beaten one to try once more;  
'Twill help him if he wants to rise,  
And boost him if he bravely tries,  
And shows determination grim;  
But it won't stop to baby him.

The world is occupied with men  
Who fall but quickly rise again;  
But those who whine because they're hit  
And step aside to sulk a bit  
Are doomed some day to wake and find  
The world has left them far behind.

## PURPOSE

Not for the sake of the gold,  
Not for the sake of the fame,  
Not for the prize would I hold  
Any ambition or aim:  
I would be brave and be true  
Just for the good I can do.

I would be useful on earth,  
Serving some purpose or cause,  
Doing some labor of worth,  
Giving no thought to applause.  
Thinking less of the gold or the fame  
Than the joy and the thrill of the game.

Medals their brightness may lose,  
Fame be forgotten or fade,  
Any reward we may choose  
Leaves the account still unpaid.  
But little real happiness lies  
In fighting alone for a prize.

Give me the thrill of the task,  
The joy of the battle and strife,  
Of being of use, and I'll ask  
No greater reward from this life.  
Better than fame or applause  
Is striving to further a cause.

## MOTHER'S GLASSES

I've told about the times that Ma can't find  
her pocketbook,  
And how we have to hustle round for it to help  
her look,  
But there's another care we know that often  
comes our way,  
I guess it happens easily a dozen times a day.  
It starts when first the postman through the  
door a letter passes,  
And Ma says: "Goodness gracious me! Where-  
ever are my glasses?"

We hunt 'em on the mantelpiece an' by the  
kitchen sink,  
Until Ma says: "Now, children, stop, an' give  
me time to think  
Just when it was I used 'em last an' just  
exactly where.  
Yes, now I know — the dining room. I'm sure  
you'll find 'em there."  
We even look behind the clock, we busy boys  
an' lasses,  
Until somebody runs across Ma's missing pair of  
glasses.

We've found 'em in the Bible, an' we've found  
'em in the flour,  
We've found 'em in the sugar bowl, an' once  
we looked an hour  
Before we came across 'em in the padding of  
her chair;  
An' many a time we've found 'em in the topknot  
of her hair.  
It's a search that ruins order an' the home com-  
pletely wrecks,  
For there's no place where you may not find  
poor Ma's elusive specs.

But we're mighty glad, I tell you, that the  
duty's ours to do,  
An' we hope to hunt those glasses till our time  
of life is through;  
It's a little bit of service that is joyous in its  
thrill,  
It's a task that calls us daily an' we hope it  
always will.  
Rich or poor, the saddest mortals of all the  
joyless masses  
Are the ones who have no mother dear to lose  
her reading glasses.

## THE PRINCESS PAT'S

*Written when the Canadian regiment, known as the "Princess Pat's," left for the front.*

A touch of the plain and the prairie,  
A bit of the Motherland, too;  
A strain of the fur-trapper wary,  
A blend of the old and the new;  
A bit of the pioneer splendor  
That opened the wilderness' flats,  
A touch of the home-lover, tender,  
You'll find in the boys they call Pat's.

The glory and grace of the maple,  
The strength that is born of the wheat,  
The pride of a stock that is staple,  
The bronze of a midsummer heat;  
A blending of wisdom and daring,  
The best of a new land, and that's  
The regiment gallantly bearing  
The neat little title of Pat's.

A bit of the man who has neighbored  
With mountains and forests and streams,  
A touch of the man who has labored  
To model and fashion his dreams;  
The strength of an age of clean living,  
Of right-minded fatherly chats,  
The best that a land could be giving  
Is there in the breasts of the Pat's.

## BE A FRIEND

Be a friend. You don't need money:  
Just a disposition sunny;  
Just the wish to help another  
Get along some way or other;  
Just a kindly hand extended  
Out to one who's unbefriended;  
Just the will to give or lend,  
This will make you someone's friend.

Be a friend. You don't need glory.  
Friendship is a simple story.  
Pass by trifling errors blindly,  
Gaze on honest effort kindly,  
Cheer the youth who's bravely trying,  
Pity him who's sadly sighing;  
Just a little labor spend  
On the duties of a friend.

Be a friend. The pay is bigger  
(Though not written by a figure)  
Than is earned by people clever  
In what's merely self-endeavor.  
You'll have friends instead of neighbors  
For the profits of your labors;  
You'll be richer in the end  
Than a prince, if you're a friend.

## THANKSGIVING

Thankful for the glory of the old Red, White  
and Blue,  
For the spirit of America that still is staunch  
and true,  
For the laughter of our children and the sun-  
light in their eyes,  
And the joy of radiant mothers and their even-  
ing lullabies;  
And thankful that our harvests wear no taint  
of blood to-day,  
But were sown and reaped by toilers who were  
light of heart and gay.

Thankful for the riches that are ours to claim  
and keep,  
The joy of honest labor and the boon of happy  
sleep,  
For each little family circle where there is no  
empty chair  
Save where God has sent the sorrow for the  
loving hearts to bear;  
And thankful for the loyal souls and brave  
hearts of the past  
Who builded that contentment should be with  
us to the last.

Thankful for the plenty that our peaceful land  
has blessed,  
For the rising sun that beckons every man to  
do his best,  
For the goal that lies before him and the promise  
when he sows  
That his hand shall reap the harvest, undisturbed  
by cruel foes;  
For the flaming torch of justice, symbolizing  
as it burns:  
Here none may rob the toiler of the prize he  
fairly earns.

To-day our thanks we're giving for the riches  
that are ours,  
For the red fruits of the orchards and the per-  
fume of the flowers,  
For our homes with laughter ringing and our  
hearthfires blazing bright,  
For our land of peace and plenty and our land  
of truth and right;  
And we're thankful for the glory of the old  
Red, White and Blue,  
For the spirit of our fathers and a manhood  
that is true.

## MA AND HER CHECK BOOK

Ma has a dandy little book that's full of narrow slips,  
An' when she wants to pay a bill a page from it she rips;  
She just writes in the dollars and the cents and signs her name  
An' that's as good as money, though it doesn't lock the same.  
When she wants another bonnet or some feathers for her neck,  
She promptly goes an' gets 'em, an' she writes another check.  
I don't just understand it, but I know she sputters when  
Pa says to her at supper: "Well! You're overdrawn again!"

Ma's not a business woman, she is much too kind of heart  
To squabble over pennies or to play a selfish part,  
An' when someone asks for money, she's not one to stop an' think  
Of a little piece of paper an' the cost of pen an' ink.

She just tells him very sweetly if he'll only  
wait a bit

An' be seated in the parlor, she will write a  
check for it.

She can write one out for twenty just as easily  
as ten,

An' forgets that Pa may grumble: "Well,  
you're overdrawn again!"

Pa says it looks as though he'll have to start in  
workin' nights

To gather in the money for the checks that  
mother writes.

He says that every morning when he's sum-  
moned to the phone,

He's afraid the bank is calling to make mother's  
shortage known.

He tells his friends if ever anything our fortune  
wrecks

They can trace it to the moment mother started  
writing checks.

He's got so that he trembles when he sees her  
fountain pen

An' he mutters: "Do be careful! You'll be  
overdrawn again!"

## THE FISHING CURE

There's nothing that builds up a toil-weary soul  
Like a day on a stream,  
Back on the banks of the old fishing hole  
Where a fellow can dream.

There's nothing so good for a man as to flee  
From the city and lie  
Full length in the shade of a whispering tree  
And gaze at the sky.

Out there where the strife and the greed are  
forgot

And the struggle for pelf,  
A man can get rid of each taint and each spot  
And clean up himself;  
He can be what he wanted to be when a boy,  
If only in dreams;  
And revel once more in the depths of a joy  
That's as real as it seems.

The things that he hates never follow him  
there —

The jar of the street,  
The rivalries petty, the struggling unfair —  
For the open is sweet.

In purity's realm he can rest and be clean,  
Be he humble or great,  
And as peaceful his soul may become as the  
scene  
That his eyes contemplate.

It is good for the world that men hunger to go  
To the banks of a stream,  
And weary of sham and of pomp and of show  
They have somewhere to dream.  
For this life would be dreary and sordid and base  
Did they not now and then  
Seek refreshment and calm in God's wide, open  
space  
And come back to be men.

### THE HAPPY SLOW THINKER

Full many a time a thought has come  
That had a bitter meaning in it.  
And in the conversation's hum  
I lost it ere I could begin it.

I've had it on my tongue to spring  
Some poisoned quip that I thought clever;  
Then something happened and the sting  
Unuttered went, and died forever.

A lot of bitter thoughts I've had  
To silence fellows and to flay 'em,  
But next day always I've been glad  
I wasn't quick enough to say 'em.

## OUT-OF-DOORS

The kids are out-of-doors once more;  
The heavy leggins that they wore,  
The winter caps that covered ears  
Are put away, and no more tears  
Are shed because they cannot go  
Until they're bundled up just so.  
No more she wonders when they're gone  
If they have put their rubbers on;  
No longer are they hourly told  
To guard themselves against a cold;  
Bareheaded now they romp and run  
Warmed only by the kindly sun.

She's put their heavy clothes away  
And turned the children out to play,  
And all the morning long they race  
Like madcaps round about the place.  
The robins on the fences sing  
A gayer song of welcoming,  
And seem as though they had a share  
In all the fun they're having there.  
The wrens and sparrows twitter, too,  
A louder and a noisier crew,  
As though it pleased them all to see  
The youngsters out of doors and free.

Outdoors they scamper to their play  
With merry din the livelong day,  
And hungrily they jostle in  
The favor of the maid to win;  
Then, armed with cookies or with cake,  
Their way into the yard they make,  
And every feathered playmate comes  
To gather up his share of crumbs.  
The finest garden that I know  
Is one where little children grow,  
Where cheeks turn brown and eyes are bright,  
And all is laughter and delight.

Oh, you may brag of gardens fine,  
But let the children race in mine;  
And let the roses, white and red,  
Make gay the ground whereon they tread.  
And who for bloom perfection seeks,  
Should mark the color on their cheeks;  
No music that the robin spouts  
Is equal to their merry shouts;  
There is no foliage to compare  
With youngsters' sun-kissed, tousled hair:  
Spring's greatest joy beyond a doubt  
Is when it brings the children out.

## REAL SINGING

You can talk about your music, and your  
operatic airs,  
And your phonographic record that Caruso's  
tenor bears;  
But there isn't any music that such wondrous  
joy can bring  
Like the concert when the kiddies and their  
mother start to sing.

When the supper time is over, then the mother  
starts to play  
Some simple little ditty, and our concert's under  
way.  
And I'm happier and richer than a millionaire  
or king  
When I listen to the kiddies and their mother  
as they sing.

There's a sweetness most appealing in the trill-  
ing of their notes:  
It is innocence that's pouring from their little  
baby throats;  
And I gaze at them enraptured, for my joy's  
a real thing  
Every evening when the kiddies and their mother  
start to sing.

## THE BUMPS AND BRUISES DOCTOR

I'm the bumps and bruises doctor;  
I'm the expert that they seek  
When their rough and tumble playing  
Leaves a scar on leg or cheek.  
I'm the rapid, certain curer  
For the wounds of every fall;  
I'm the pain eradicator;  
I can always heal them all.

Bumps on little people's foreheads  
I can quickly smooth away;  
I take splinters out of fingers  
Without very much delay.  
Little sorrows I can banish  
With the magic of my touch;  
I can fix a bruise that's dreadful  
So it isn't hurting much.

I'm the bumps and bruises doctor,  
And I answer every call,  
And my fee is very simple,  
Just a kiss, and that is all.  
And I'm sitting here and wishing  
In the years that are to be,  
When they face life's real troubles  
That they'll bring them all to me.

## WHEN PA COUNTS

Pa's not so very big or brave; he can't lift  
weights like Uncle Jim;

His hands are soft like little girls'; most anyone  
could wallop him.

Ma weighs a whole lot more than Pa. When  
they go swimming, she could stay

Out in the river all day long, but Pa gets frozen  
right away.

But when the thunder starts to roll, an' lightnin'  
spits, Ma says, "Oh, dear,

I'm sure we'll all of us be killed. I only wish  
your Pa was here."

Pa's cheeks are thin an' kinder pale; he couldn't  
rough it worth a cent.

He couldn't stand the hike we had the day the  
Boy Scouts camping went.

He has to hire a man to dig the garden, coz his  
back gets lame,

An' he'd be crippled for a week, if he should  
play a baseball game.

But when a thunder storm comes up, Ma sits an'  
shivers in the gloam

An' every time the thunder rolls, she says: "I  
wish your Pa was home."

I don't know just what Pa could do if he were  
home, he seems so frail,  
But every time the skies grow black I notice Ma  
gets rather pale.  
An' when she's called us children in, an' locked  
the windows an' the doors,  
She jumps at every lightnin' flash an' trembles  
when the thunder roars.  
An' when the baby starts to cry, she wrings her  
hands an' says: "Oh, dear!  
It's terrible! It's terrible! I only wish your  
Pa was here."

### PEACE

A man must earn his hour of peace,  
Must pay for it with hours of strife and care,  
Must win by toil the evening's sweet release,  
The rest that may be portioned for his share;  
The idler never knows it, never can.  
Peace is the glory ever of a man.

A man must win contentment for his soul,  
Must battle for it bravely day by day;  
The peace he seeks is not a near-by goal;  
To claim it he must tread a rugged way.  
The shirker never knows a tranquil breast;  
Peace but rewards the man who does his best.

## NO PLACE TO GO

The happiest nights  
I ever know  
Are those when I've  
No place to go,  
And the missus says  
When the day is through:  
"To-night we haven't  
A thing to do."

Oh, the joy of it,  
And the peace untold  
Of sitting 'round  
In my slippers old,  
With my pipe and book  
In my easy chair,  
Knowing I needn't  
Go anywhere.

Needn't hurry  
My evening meal  
Nor force the smiles  
That I do not feel,  
But can grab a book  
From a near-by shelf,  
And drop all sham  
And be myself.

Oh, the charm of it  
And the comfort rare;  
Nothing on earth  
With it can compare;  
And I'm sorry for him  
Who doesn't know  
The joy of having  
No place to go.

## DEFEAT

No one is beat till he quits,  
No one is through till he stops,  
No matter how hard Failure hits,  
No matter how often he drops,  
A fellow's not down till he lies  
In the dust and refuses to rise.

Fate can slam him and bang him around,  
And batter his frame till he's sore,  
But she never can say that he's downed  
While he bobs up serenely for more.  
A fellow's not dead till he dies,  
Nor beat till no longer he tries.

## A PATRIOTIC WISH

I'd like to be the sort of man the flag could  
boast about;

I'd like to be the sort of man it cannot live  
without;

I'd like to be the type of man  
That really is American:  
The head-erect and shoulders-square,  
Clean-minded fellow, just and fair,  
That all men picture when they see  
The glorious banner of the free.

I'd like to be the sort of man the flag now  
typifies,

The kind of man we really want the flag to  
symbolize;

The loyal brother to a trust,  
The big, unselfish soul and just,  
The friend of every man oppressed,  
The strong support of all that's best,  
The sturdy chap the banner's meant,  
Where'er it flies, to represent.

I'd like to be the sort of man the flag's supposed  
to mean,

The man that all in fancy see wherever it is  
seen,

The chap that's ready for a fight  
Whenever there's a wrong to right,

The friend in every time of need,  
The doer of the daring deed,  
The clean and generous handed man  
That is a real American.

### THE PRICE OF JOY

You don't begrudge the labor when the roses  
start to bloom;  
You don't recall the dreary days that won you  
their perfume;  
You don't recall a single care  
You spent upon the garden there;  
And all the toil  
Of tilling soil  
Is quite forgot the day the first  
Pink rosebuds into beauty burst.

You don't begrudge the trials grim when joy  
has come to you;  
You don't recall the dreary days when all your  
skies are blue;  
And though you've trod a weary mile  
The ache of it was all worth while;  
And all the stings  
And bitter flings  
Are wiped away upon the day  
Success comes dancing down the way.

## THE THINGS THAT MAKE A SOLDIER GREAT

The things that make a soldier great and send  
him out to die,  
To face the flaming cannon's mouth nor ever  
question why,  
Are lilacs by a little porch, the row of tulips  
red,  
The peonies and pansies, too, the old petunia bed,  
The grass plot where his children play, the roses  
on the wall:  
'Tis these that make a soldier great. He's fight-  
ing for them all.

'Tis not the pomp and pride of kings that make  
a soldier brave;  
'Tis not allegiance to the flag that over him may  
wave;  
For soldiers never fight so well on land or on  
the foam  
As when behind the cause they see the little  
place called home.  
Endanger but that humble street whereon his  
children run,  
You make a soldier of the man who never bore  
a gun.

What is it through the battle smoke the valiant  
soldier sees?

The little garden far away, the budding apple  
trees,

The little patch of ground back there, the chil-  
dren at their play,

Perhaps a tiny mound behind the simple church  
of gray.

The golden thread of courage isn't linked to  
castle dome

But to the spot, where'er it be — the humble spot  
called home.

And now the lilacs bud again and all is lovely  
there

And homesick soldiers far away know spring  
is in the air;

The tulips come to bloom again, the grass  
once more is green,

And every man can see the spot where all his  
joys have been.

He sees his children smile at him, he hears the  
bugle call,

And only death can stop him now — he's fight-  
ing for them all.

## THE JOY OF A DOG

Ma says no, it's too much care  
An' it will scatter germs an' hair,  
An' it's a nuisance through and through.  
An' barks when you don't want it to;  
An' carries dirt from off the street,  
An' tracks the carpets with its feet.  
But it's a sign he's growin' up  
When he is longin' for a pup.

Most every night he comes to me  
An' climbs a-straddle of my knee  
An' starts to fondle me an' pet,  
Then asks me if I've found one yet.  
An' ma says: "Now don't tell him yes;  
You know they make an awful mess,"  
An' starts their faults to catalogue.  
But every boy should have a dog.

An' some night when he comes to me,  
Deep in my pocket there will be  
The pup he's hungry to possess  
Or else I sadly miss my guess.  
For I remember all the joy  
A dog meant to a little boy  
Who loved it in the long ago,  
The joy that's now his right to know.

## HOMESICK

It's tough when you are homesick in a strange  
and distant place;  
It's anguish when you're hungry for an old-  
familiar face.  
And yearning for the good folks and the joys  
you used to know,  
When you're miles away from friendship, is a  
bitter sort of woe.  
But it's tougher, let me tell you, and a stiffer  
discipline  
To see them through the window, and to know  
you can't go in.  
Oh, I never knew the meaning of that red sign  
on the door,  
Never really understood it, never thought of it  
before;  
But I'll never see another since they've tacked  
one up on mine  
But I'll think about the father that is barred  
from all that's fine.  
And I'll think about the mother who is prisoner  
in there  
So her little son or daughter shall not miss a  
mother's care.  
And I'll share a fellow feeling with the saddest  
of my kin,  
The dad beside the gateway of the home he  
can't go in.

Oh, we laugh and joke together and the mother  
tries to be  
Brave and sunny in her prison, and she thinks  
she's fooling me;  
And I do my bravest smiling and I feign a  
merry air  
In the hope she won't discover that I'm bur-  
dened down with care.  
But it's only empty laughter, and there's nothing  
in the grin  
When you're talking through the window of the  
home you can't go in.

#### THE PERFECT DINNER TABLE

A table cloth that's slightly soiled  
Where greasy little hands have toiled;  
The napkins kept in silver rings,  
And only ordinary things  
From which to eat, a simple fare,  
And just the wife and kiddies there,  
And while I serve, the clatter glad  
Of little girl and little lad  
Who have so very much to say  
About the happenings of the day.

Four big round eyes that dance with glee,  
Forever flashing joys at me,  
Two little tongues that race and run  
To tell of troubles and of fun;

The mother with a patient smile  
Who knows that she must wait awhile  
Before she'll get a chance to say  
What she's discovered through the day.  
She steps aside for girl and lad  
Who have so much to tell their dad.

Our manners may not be the best;  
Perhaps our elbows often rest  
Upon the table, and at times  
That very worst of dinner crimes,  
That very shameful act and rude  
Of speaking ere you've downed your food,  
Too frequently, I fear, is done,  
So fast the little voices run.  
Yet why should table manners stay  
Those tongues that have so much to say?

At many a table I have been  
Where wealth and luxury were seen,  
And I have dined in halls of pride  
Where all the guests were dignified;  
But when it comes to pleasure rare  
The perfect dinner table's where  
No stranger's face is ever known:  
The dinner hour we spend alone,  
When little girl and little lad  
Run riot telling things to dad.

## TO-MORROW

He was going to be all that a mortal should be  
To-morrow.

No one should be kinder or braver than he  
To-morrow.

A friend who was troubled and weary he knew,  
Who'd be glad of a lift and who needed it, too;  
On him he would call and see what he could do  
To-morrow.

Each morning he stacked up the letters he'd  
write  
To-morrow.

And thought of the folks he would fill with  
delight  
To-morrow.

It was too bad, indeed, he was busy to-day,  
And hadn't a minute to stop on his way;  
More time he would have to give others, he'd  
say,

To-morrow.

The greatest of workers this man would have  
been  
To-morrow.

The world would have known him, had he ever  
seen  
To-morrow.

But the fact is he died and he faded from view,  
And all that he left here when living was  
through

Was a mountain of things he intended to do  
To-morrow.

### A PRAYER

God grant me kindly thought  
And patience through the day,  
And in the things I've wrought  
Let no man living say  
That hate's grim mark has stained  
What little joy I've gained.

God keep my nature sweet,  
Teach me to bear a blow,  
Disaster and defeat,  
And no resentment show.  
If failure must be mine  
Sustain this soul of mine.

God grant me strength to face  
Undaunted day or night;  
To stoop to no disgrace  
To win my little fight;  
Let me be, when it is o'er,  
As manly as before.

## TO THE LADY IN THE ELECTRIC

Lady in the show case carriage,  
Do not think that I'm a bear;  
Not for worlds would I disparage  
One so gracious and so fair;  
Do not think that I am blind to  
One who has a smile seraphic;  
You I'd never be unkind to,  
But you are impeding traffic.

If I had some way of knowing  
What you are about to do,  
Just exactly where you're going,  
If I could depend on you,  
I could keep my engine churning,  
Travel on and never mind you.  
Lady, when you think of turning,  
Why not signal us behind you?

Lady, free from care and worry,  
Riding in your plate-glass car,  
Some of us are in a hurry;  
Some of us must travel far.  
I, myself, am eager, very,  
To be journeying on my way;  
Lady, is it necessary  
To monopolize the highway?

Lady, at the handle, steering,  
Why not keep a course that's straight?  
Know you not that wildly veering  
As you do, is tempting fate?  
Do not think my horn I'm blowing  
Just on purpose to harass you,  
It is just a signal showing  
That I'd safely like to pass you.

Lady, there are times a duty  
Must be done, however saddening;  
It is hard to tell a beauty  
That she's very often maddening.  
And I would not now be saying  
Harsh and cruel words to fuss you,  
But when traffic you're delaying  
You are forcing men to cuss you.

## THE MAN WHO COULDN'T SAVE

He spent what he made, or he gave it away,  
Tried to save money, and would for a day,  
Started a bank-account time an' again,  
Got a hundred or so for a nest egg, an' then  
Some fellow that needed it more than he did,  
Who was down on his luck, with a sick wife  
or kid,  
Came along an' he wasted no time till he went  
An' drew out the coin that for saving was  
meant.

They say he died poor, and I guess that is so:  
To pile up a fortune he hadn't a show;  
He worked all the time and good money he made,  
Was known as an excellent man at his trade,  
But he saw too much, heard too much, felt too  
much here  
To save anything by the end of the year,  
An' the shabbiest wreck the Lord ever let live  
Could get money from him if he had it to give.

I've seen him slip dimes to the bums on the street  
Who told him they hungered for something to  
eat,  
An' though I remarked they were going for  
drink  
He'd say: "Mebbe so. But I'd just hate to  
think

That fellow was hungry an' I'd passed him by;  
I'd rather be fooled twenty times by a lie  
Than wonder if one of 'em I wouldn't feed  
Had told me the truth an' was really in need."

Never stinted his family out of a thing:  
They had everything that his money could bring;  
Said he'd rather be broke and just know they  
were glad,

Than rich, with them pining an' wishing they had  
Some of the pleasures his money would buy;  
Said he never could look a bank book in the eye  
If he knew it had grown on the pleasures and  
joys

That he'd robbed from his wife and his girls  
and his boys.

Queer sort of notion he had, I confess,  
Yet many a rich man on earth is mourned less.  
All who had known him came back to his side  
To honor his name on the day that he died.  
Didn't leave much in the bank, it is true,  
But did leave a fortune in people who knew  
The big heart of him, an' I'm willing to swear  
That to-day he is one of the richest up there.

## ANSWERING HIM

“ When shall I be a man? ” he said,  
As I was putting him to bed.

“ How many years will have to be  
Before Time makes a man of me?  
And will I be a man when I  
Am grown up big? ” I heaved a sigh,  
Because it called for careful thought  
To give the answer that he sought.

And so I sat him on my knee,  
And said to him: “ A man you’ll be  
When you have learned that honor brings  
More joy than all the crowns of kings;  
That it is better to be true  
To all who know and trust in you  
Than all the gold of earth to gain  
If winning it shall leave a stain.

“ When you can fight for victory sweet,  
Yet bravely swallow down defeat,  
And cling to hope and keep the right,  
Nor use deceit instead of might;  
When you are kind and brave and clean,  
And fair to all and never mean;  
When there is good in all you plan,  
That day, my boy, you’ll be a man.

“ Some of us learn this truth too late;  
That years alone can’t make us great;  
That many who are three-score, ten  
Have fallen short of being men,  
Because in selfishness they fought  
And toiled without refining thought;  
And whether wrong or whether right  
They lived but for their own delight.

“ When you have learned that you must hold  
Your honor dearer far than gold;  
That no ill-gotten wealth or fame  
Can pay you for your tarnished name;  
And when in all you say or do  
Of others you’re considerate, too,  
Content to do the best you can  
By such a creed, you’ll be a man.”

## FATHER AND SON

Be more than his dad,  
Be a chum to the lad;  
Be a part of his life  
Every hour of the day;  
Find time to talk with him,  
Take time to walk with him,  
Share in his studies  
And share in his play;  
Take him to places,  
To ball games and races,  
Teach him the things  
That you want him to know;  
Don't live apart from him,  
Don't keep your heart from him,  
Be his best comrade,  
He's needing you so!

Never neglect him,  
Though young, still respect him,  
Hear his opinions  
With patience and pride;  
Show him his error,  
But be not a terror,  
Grim-visaged and fearful,  
When he's at your side.

Know what his thoughts are,  
Know what his sports are,  
Know all his playmates,  
It's easy to learn to;  
Be such a father  
That when troubles gather  
You'll be the first one  
For counsel, he'll turn to.

You can inspire him  
With courage, and fire him  
Hot with ambition  
For deeds that are good;  
He'll not betray you  
Nor illy repay you,  
If you have taught him  
The things that you should.  
Father and son  
Must in all things be one —  
Partners in trouble  
And comrades in joy.  
More than a dad  
Was the best pal you had;  
Be such a chum  
As you knew, to your boy.

## THE JUNE COUPLE

She is fair to see and sweet,  
Dainty from her head to feet,  
Modest, as her blushing shows,  
Happy, as her smiles disclose,  
And the young man at her side  
Nervously attempts to hide  
Underneath a visage grim  
That the fuss is bothering him.

Pause a moment, happy pair!  
This is not the station where  
Romance ends, and wooing stops  
And the charm from courtship drops;  
This is but the outward gate  
Where the souls of mortals mate,  
But the border of the land  
You must travel hand in hand.

You who come to marriage, bring  
All your tenderness, and cling  
Steadfastly to all the ways  
That have marked your wooing days.  
You are only starting out  
On life's roadways, hedged about  
Thick with roses and with tares,  
Sweet delights and bitter cares.

Heretofore you've only played  
At love's game, young man and maid;  
Only known it at its best;  
Now you'll have to face its test.  
You must prove your love worth while,  
Something time cannot defile,  
Something neither care nor pain  
Can destroy or mar or stain.

You are now about to show  
Whether love is real or no;  
Yonder down the lane of life  
You will find, as man and wife,  
Sorrows, disappointments, doubt,  
Hope will almost flicker out;  
But if rightly you are wed  
Love will linger where you tread.

There are joys that you will share,  
Joys to balance every care;  
Arm in arm remain, and you  
Will not fear the storms that brew,  
If when you are sorest tried  
You face your trials, side by side.  
Now your wooing days are done,  
And your loving years begun.

## AT THE DOOR

He wiped his shoes before his door,  
But ere he entered he did more:  
'Twas not enough to cleanse his feet  
Of dirt they'd gathered in the street;  
He stood and dusted off his mind  
And left all trace of care behind.  
"In here I will not take," said he,  
"The stains the day has brought to me.

"Beyond this door shall never go  
The burdens that are mine to know;  
The day is done, and here I leave  
The petty things that vex and grieve;  
What clings to me of hate and sin  
To them I will not carry in;  
Only the good shall go with me  
For their devoted eyes to see.

"I will not burden them with cares,  
Nor track the home with grim affairs;  
I will not at my table sit  
With soul unclean, and mind unfit;  
Beyond this door I will not take  
The outward signs of inward ache;  
I will not take a dreary mind  
Into this house for them to find."

He wiped his shoes before his door,  
But paused to do a little more.

He dusted off the stains of strife,  
The mud that's incident to life,  
The blemishes of careless thought,  
The traces of the fight he'd fought,  
The selfish humors and the mean,  
And when he entered he was clean.

## DUTY

To do your little bit of toil,  
To play life's game with head erect;  
To stoop to nothing that would soil  
Your honor or your self-respect;  
To win what gold and fame you can,  
But first of all to be a man.

To know the bitter and the sweet,  
The sunshine and the days of rain;  
To meet both victory and defeat,  
Nor boast too loudly nor complain;  
To face whatever fates befall  
And be a man throughout it all.

To seek success in honest strife,  
But not to value it so much  
That, winning it, you go through life  
Stained by dishonor's scarlet touch.  
What goal or dream you choose, pursue,  
But be a man whate'er you do!

## A BEAR STORY

There was a bear — his name was Jim,  
An' children weren't askeered of him,  
An' he lived in a cave, where he  
Was confortubbul as could be,  
An' in that cave, so my Pa said,  
Jim always kept a stock of bread  
An' honey, so that he could treat  
The boys an' girls along his street.

An' all that Jim could say was "Woof!"  
An' give a grunt that went like "Soof!"  
An' Pa says when his grunt went off  
It sounded jus' like Grandpa's cough,  
Or like our Jerry when he's mad  
An' growls at peddler men that's bad.  
While grown-ups were afraid of Jim,  
Kids could do anything with him.

One day a little boy like me  
That had a sister Marjorie,  
Was walking through the woods, an' they  
Heard something "woofing" down that way,  
An' they was scared an' stood stock still  
An' wished they had a gun to kill  
Whatever 'twas, but little boys  
Don't have no guns that make a noise.

An' soon the "woofing" closer grew,  
An' then a bear came into view,  
The biggest bear you ever saw —  
Ma's muff was smaller than his paw.  
He saw the children an' he said:  
"I ain't a-goin' to kill you dead;  
You needn't turn away an' run;  
I'm only scarin' you for fun."

An' then he stood up just like those  
Big bears in circuses an' shows,  
An' danced a jig, an' rolled about  
An' said "Woof! Woof!" which meant "Look  
out!"

An' turned a somersault as slick  
As any boy can do the trick.  
Those children had been told of Jim  
An' they decided it was him.

They stroked his nose when they got brave,  
An' followed him into his cave,  
An' Jim asked them if they liked honey,  
They said they did. Said Jim: "That's funny.  
I've asked a thousand boys or so  
That question, an' not one's said no."  
What happened then I cannot say  
'Cause next I knew 'twas light as day.

## AUTUMN AT THE ORCHARD

The sumac's flaming scarlet on the edges o' the lake,  
An' the pear trees are invitin' everyone t' come an' shake.  
Now the gorgeous tints of autumn are appearin' everywhere  
Till it seems that you can almost see the Master Painter there.  
There's a solemn sort o' stillness that's pervadin' every thing,  
Save the farewell songs to summer that the feathered tenors sing,  
An' you quite forget the city where disgruntled folks are kickin'  
Off yonder with the Pelletiers, when spies are ripe fer pickin'.  
The Holsteins are a-posin' in a clearin' near a wood,  
Very dignified an' stately, just as though they understood  
That they're lendin' to life's pictures just the touch the Master needs,  
An' they're preachin' more refinement than a lot o' printed creeds.  
The orchard's fairly groanin' with the gifts o' God to man,  
Just as though they meant to shame us who have doubted once His plan.

Oh, there's somethin' most inspirin' to a soul in  
need o' prickin'

Off yonder with the Pelletiers when spies are  
ripe fer pickin'.

The frisky little Shetlands now are growin'  
shaggy coats

An' acquirin' silken mufflers of their own to  
guard their throats;

An' a Russian wolf-hound puppy left its mother  
yesterday,

An' a tinge o' sorrow touched us as we saw it  
go away.

For the sight was full o' meanin', an' we knew,  
when it had gone,

'Twas a symbol of the partin's that the years are  
bringin' on.

Oh, a feller must be better — to his faith he can't  
help stickin'

Off yonder with the Pelletiers when spies are ripe  
fer pickin'.

The year is almost over, now at dusk the valleys  
glow

With the misty mantle chillin', that is hangin'  
very low.

An' each mornin' sees the maples just a little  
redder turned

Than they were the night we left 'em, an' the  
elms are browner burned.

An' a feller can't help feelin', an' I don't care  
who it is,  
That the mind that works such wonders has a  
greater power than his.  
Oh, I know that I'll remember till life's last few  
sparks are flickin'  
The lessons out at Pelletiers when spies were ripe  
for pickin'.

### WHEN PA COMES HOME

When Pa comes home, I'm at the door,  
An' then he grabs me off the floor  
An' throws me up an' catches me  
When I come down, an' then, says he:  
"Well, how'd you get along to-day?  
An' were you good, an' did you play,  
An' keep right out of mamma's way?  
An' how'd you get that awful bump  
Above your eye? My, what a lump!  
An' who spilled jelly on your shirt?  
An' where'd you ever find the dirt  
That's on your hands? And my! Oh, my!  
I guess those eyes have had a cry,  
They look so red. What was it, pray?  
What has been happening here to-day?"

An' then he drops his coat an' hat  
Upon a chair, an' says: "What's that?

Who knocked that engine on its back  
An' stepped upon that piece of track?"  
An' then he takes me on his knee  
An' says: "What's this that now I see?  
Whatever can the matter be?  
Who strewed those toys upon the floor,  
An' left those things behind the door?  
Who upset all those parlor chairs  
An' threw those blocks upon the stairs?  
I guess a cyclone called to-day  
While I was workin' far away.  
Who was it worried mamma so?  
It can't be anyone I know."

An' then I laugh an' say: "It's me!  
Me did most ever'thing you see.  
Me got this bump the time me tripped.  
An' here is where the jelly slipped  
Right off my bread upon my shirt,  
An' when me tumbled down it hurt.  
That's how me got all over dirt.  
Me threw those building blocks downstairs,  
An' me upset the parlor chairs,  
Coz when you're playin' train you've got  
To move things 'round an awful lot."  
An' then my Pa he kisses me  
An' bounces me upon his knee  
An' says: "Well, well, my little lad,  
What glorious fun you must have had!"

## MOTHER'S DAY

Gentle hands that never weary toiling in love's  
vineyard sweet,  
Eyes that seem forever cheery when our eyes  
they chance to meet,  
Tender, patient, brave, devoted, this is always  
mother's way.  
Could her worth in gold be quoted as you think  
of her to-day?

There shall never be another quite so tender,  
quite so kind  
As the patient little mother; nowhere on this  
earth you'll find  
Her affection duplicated; none so proud if you  
are fine.  
Could her worth be overstated? Not by any  
words of mine.

Death stood near the hour she bore us, agony  
was hers to know,  
Yet she bravely faced it for us, smiling in her  
time of woe;  
Down the years how oft we've tried her, often  
selfish, heedless, blind,  
Yet with love alone to guide her she was never  
once unkind.

Vain are all our tributes to her if in words  
alone they dwell.  
We must live the praises due her; there's no  
other way to tell  
Gentle mother that we love her. Would you say,  
as you recall  
All the patient service of her, you've been  
worthy of it all?

## DIVISION

You cannot gather every rose,  
Nor every pleasure claim,  
Nor bask in every breeze that blows,  
Nor play in every game.

No millionaire could ever own  
The world's supply of pearls,  
And no man here has ever known  
All of the pretty girls.

So take what joy may come your way,  
And envy not your brothers;  
Enjoy your share of fun each day,  
And leave the rest for others.

## A MAN

A man doesn't whine at his losses.

A man doesn't whimper and fret,  
Or rail at the weight of his crosses  
And ask life to rear him a pet.

A man doesn't grudgingly labor  
Or look upon toil as a blight;

A man doesn't sneer at his neighbor  
Or sneak from a cause that is right.

A man doesn't sulk when another  
Succeeds where his efforts have failed;  
Doesn't keep all his praise for the brother  
Whose glory is publicly hailed;  
And pass by the weak and the humble  
As though they were not of his clay;  
A man doesn't ceaselessly grumble  
When things are not going his way.

A man looks on woman as tender  
And gentle, and stands at her side  
At all times to guard and defend her,  
And never to scorn or deride.

A man looks on life as a mission.  
To serve, just so far as he can;

A man holds his noblest ambition  
On earth is to live as a man.

## A VOW

I might not ever scale the mountain heights  
Where all the great men stand in glory now;  
I may not ever gain the world's delights  
Or win a wreath of laurel for my brow;  
I may not gain the victories that men  
Are fighting for, nor do a thing to boast of;  
I may not get a fortune here, but then,  
The little that I have I'll make the most of.

I'll make my little home a palace fine,  
My little patch of green a garden fair,  
And I shall know each humble plant and vine  
As rich men know their orchid blossoms rare.  
My little home may not be much to see;  
Its chimneys may not tower far above;  
But it will be a mansion great to me,  
For in its walls I'll keep a hoard of love.

I will not pass my modest pleasures by  
To grasp at shadows of more splendid things,  
Disdaining what of joyousness is nigh  
Because I am denied the joy of kings.  
But I will laugh and sing my way along,  
I'll make the most of what is mine to-day,  
And if I never rise above the throng,  
I shall have lived a full life anyway.

## TREASURES

Some folks I know, when friends drop in  
To visit for awhile and chin,  
Just lead them round the rooms and halls  
And show them pictures on their walls,  
And point to rugs and tapestries  
The works of men across the seas:  
Their loving cups they show with pride,  
To eyes that soon are stretching wide  
With wonder at the treasures rare  
That have been bought and gathered there.

But when folks come to call on me,  
I've no such things for them to see.  
No picture on my walls is great;  
I have no ancient family plate;  
No tapestry of rare design  
Or costly woven rugs are mine;  
I have no loving cup to show,  
Or strange and valued curio;  
But if my treasures they would see,  
I bid them softly follow me.

And then I lead them up the stairs  
Through trains of cars and Teddy bears,  
And to a little room we creep  
Where both my youngsters lie asleep,  
Close locked in one another's arms.  
I let them gaze upon their charms,

I let them see the legs of brown  
Curled up beneath a sleeping gown,  
And whisper in my happiness:  
"Behold the treasures I possess."

## CHALLENGE

Life is a challenge to the bold,  
It flings its gauntlet down  
And bids us, if we seek for gold  
And glory and renown,  
To come and *take* them from its store,  
It will not meekly hand them o'er.

Life is a challenge all must meet,  
And nobly must we dare;  
Its gold is tawdry when we cheat,  
Its fame a bitter snare  
If it be stolen from life's clutch;  
Men must be true to prosper much.

Life is a challenge and its laws  
Are rigid ones and stern;  
The splendid joy of real applause  
Each man must nobly earn.  
It makes us win its jewels rare,  
But gives us paste, if we're unfair.

## A TOAST TO HAPPINESS

To happiness I raise my glass,  
    The goal of every human,  
The hope of every clan and class  
    And every man and woman.  
The daydreams of the urchin there,  
The sweet theme of the maiden's prayer,  
    The strong man's one ambition,  
The sacred prize of mothers sweet,  
The tramp of soldiers on the street  
    Have all the selfsame mission.  
Life here is nothing more nor less  
Than just a quest for happiness.

Some seek it on the mountain top,  
    And some within a mine;  
The widow in her notion shop  
    Expecting its sun to shine.  
The tramp that seeks new roads to fare,  
Is one with king and millionaire  
    In this that each is groping  
On different roads, in different ways,  
To come to glad, contented days,  
    And shares the common hoping.  
The sound of martial fife and drum  
Is born of happiness to come.

Yet happiness is always here  
Had we the eyes to see it;  
No breast but holds a fund of cheer  
Had man the will to free it.  
'Tis there upon the mountain top,  
Or in the widow's notion shop,  
'Tis found in homes of sorrow;  
'Tis woven in the memories  
Of happier, brighter days than these,  
The gift, not of to-morrow  
But of to-day, and in our tears  
Some touch of happiness appears.

'Tis not a joy that's born of wealth:  
The poor man may possess it.  
'Tis not alone the prize of health:  
No sickness can repress it.  
'Tis not the end of mortal strife,  
The sunset of the day of life,  
Or but the old should find it;  
It is the bond twixt God and man,  
The touch divine in all we plan,  
And has the soul behind it.  
And so this toast to happiness,  
The seed of which we all possess.

## GUESSING TIME

It's guessing time at our house; every evening  
after tea  
We start guessing what old Santa's going to  
leave us on our tree.  
Everyone of us holds secrets that the others try  
to steal,  
And that eyes and lips are plainly having trouble  
to conceal.  
And a little lip that quivered just a bit the other  
night  
Was a sad and startling warning that I mustn't  
guess it right.

“ Guess what you will get for Christmas! ” is the  
cry that starts the fun.  
And I answer: “ Give the letter with which the  
name's begun.”  
Oh, the eyes that dance around me and the joy-  
ous faces there  
Keep me nightly guessing wildly: “ Is it some-  
thing I can wear? ”  
I implore them all to tell me in a frantic sort  
of way  
And pretend that I am puzzled, just to keep them  
feeling gay.

Oh, the wise and knowing glances that across the  
table fly  
And the winks exchanged with mother, that they  
think I never spy;  
Oh, the whispered confidences that are poured  
into her ear,  
And the laughter gay that follows when I try  
my best to hear!  
Oh, the shouts of glad derision when I bet that  
it's a cane,  
And the merry answering chorus: "No, it's  
not. Just guess again!"

It's guessing time at our house, and the fun is  
running fast,  
And I wish somehow this contest of delight  
could always last,  
For the love that's in their faces and their laugh-  
ter ringing clear  
Is their dad's most precious present when the  
Christmas time is near.  
And soon as it is over, when the tree is bare  
and plain,  
I shall start in looking forward to the time to  
guess again.

## UNDERSTANDING

When I was young and frivolous and never  
stopped to think,  
When I was always doing wrong, or just upon  
the brink;  
When I was just a lad of seven and eight and  
nine and ten,  
It seemed to me that every day I got in trouble  
then,  
And strangers used to shake their heads and say  
I was no good,  
But father always stuck to me — it seems he  
understood.

I used to have to go to him 'most every night  
and say  
The dreadful things that I had done to worry  
folks that day.  
I know I didn't mean to be a turmoil round the  
place,  
And with the womenfolks about forever in dis-  
grace;  
To do the way they said I should, I tried the  
best I could,  
But though they scolded me a lot — my father  
understood.

He never seemed to think it queer that I should  
risk my bones,  
Or fight with other boys at times, or pelt a cat  
with stones;  
An' when I'd break a window pane, it used to  
make him sad,  
But though the neighbors said I was, he never  
thought me bad;  
He never whipped me, as they used to say to me  
he should;  
That boys can't always do what's right — it  
seemed he understood.

Now there's that little chap of mine, just full of  
life and fun,  
Comes up to me with solemn face to tell the  
bad he's done.  
It's natural for any boy to be a roguish elf,  
He hasn't time to stop and think and figure for  
himself,  
And though the womenfolks insist that I should  
take a hand,  
They've never been a boy themselves, and they  
don't understand.

Some day I've got to go up there, and make a  
sad report

And tell the Father of us all where I have fallen short;  
And there will be a lot of wrong I never meant to do,  
A lot of smudges on my sheet that He will have to view.  
And little chance for heavenly bliss, up there, will I command,  
Unless the Father smiles and says: "My boy, I understand."

### PEOPLE LIKED HIM

People liked him, not because  
He was rich or known to fame;  
He had never won applause  
As a star in any game.  
His was not a brilliant style,  
His was not a forceful way,  
But he had a gentle smile  
And a kindly word to say.

Never arrogant or proud,  
On he went with manner mild;  
Never quarrelsome or loud,  
Just as simple as a child;  
Honest, patient, brave and true:  
Thus he lived from day to day,  
Doing what he found to do  
In a cheerful sort of way.

Wasn't one to boast of gold  
Or belittle it with sneers,  
Didn't change from hot to cold,  
Kept his friends throughout the years,  
Sort of man you like to meet  
Any time or any place.  
There was always something sweet  
And refreshing in his face.

Sort of man you'd like to be:  
Balanced well and truly square;  
Patient in adversity,  
Generous when his skies were fair.  
Never lied to friend or foe,  
Never rash in word or deed,  
Quick to come and slow to go  
In a neighbor's time of need.

Never rose to wealth or fame,  
Simply lived, and simply died,  
But the passing of his name  
Left a sorrow, far and wide.  
Not for glory he'd attained,  
Nor for what he had of pelf,  
Were the friends that he had gained,  
But for what he was himself.

## WHEN FATHER SHOOK THE STOVE

'Twas not so many years ago,  
    Say, twenty-two or three,  
When zero weather or below  
    Held many a thrill for me.  
Then in my icy room I slept  
    A youngster's sweet repose,  
And always on my form I kept  
    My flannel underclothes.  
Then I was roused by sudden shock  
    Though still to sleep I strove,  
I knew that it was seven o'clock  
    When father shook the stove.

I never heard him quit his bed  
    Or his alarm clock ring;  
I never heard his gentle tread,  
    Or his attempts to sing;  
The sun that found my window pane  
    On me was wholly lost,  
Though many a sunbeam tried in vain  
    To penetrate the frost.  
To human voice I never stirred,  
    But deeper down I dove  
Beneath the covers, when I heard  
    My father shake the stove.

To-day it all comes back to me  
And I can hear it still;  
He seemed to take a special glee  
In shaking with a will.  
He flung the noisy dampers back,  
Then rattled steel on steel,  
Until the force of his attack  
The building seemed to feel.  
Though I'd a youngster's heavy eyes  
All sleep from them he drove;  
It seemed to me the dead must rise  
When father shook the stove.

Now radiators thump and pound  
And every room is warm,  
And modern men new ways have found  
To shield us from the storm.  
The window panes are seldom glossed  
The way they used to be;  
The pictures left by old Jack Frost  
Our children never see.  
And now that he has gone to rest  
In God's great slumber grove,  
I often think those days were best  
When father shook the stove.

## HOUSE-HUNTING

Time was when spring returned we went  
To find another home to rent;  
We wanted fresher, cleaner walls,  
And bigger rooms and wider halls,  
And open plumbing and the dome  
That made the fashionable home.

But now with spring we want to sell,  
And seek a finer place to dwell.  
Our thoughts have turned from dens and domes;  
We want the latest thing in homes;  
To life we'll not be reconciled  
Until we have a bathroom tiled.

A butler's pantry we desire,  
Although no butler do we hire;  
Nell's life will be one round of gloom  
Without a closet for the broom,  
And mine will dreary be and sour  
Unless the bathroom has a shower.

For months and months we've sat and dreamed  
Of paneled walls and ceilings beamed  
And built-in cases for the books,  
An attic room to be the cook's.  
No house will she consent to view  
Unless it has a sun room, too.

There must be wash bowls here and there  
To save much climbing of the stair;  
A sleeping porch we both demand —  
This fad has swept throughout the land —  
And, Oh, 'twill give her heart a wrench  
Not to possess a few doors, French.

I want to dig and walk around  
At least full fifty feet of ground;  
She wants the latest style in tubs;  
I want more room for trees and shrubs,  
And a garage, with light and heat,  
That can be entered from the street.

The trouble is the things we seek  
Cannot be bought for ten-a-week.  
And all the joys for which we sigh  
Are just too rich for us to buy.  
We have the taste to cut a dash:  
The thing we're lacking most is cash.

## AN EASY WORLD

It's an easy world to live in if you choose to  
make it so;  
You never need to suffer, save the griefs that  
all must know;  
If you'll stay upon the level and will do the  
best you can  
You will never lack the friendship of a kindly  
fellow man.

Life's an easy road to travel if you'll only walk  
it straight;  
There are many here to help you in your little  
bouts with fate;  
When the clouds begin to gather and your hopes  
begin to fade,  
If you've only toiled in honor you won't have  
to call for aid.

But if you've bartered friendship and the faith  
on which it rests  
For a temporary winning; if you've cheated in  
the tests,  
If with promises you've broken, you have chilled  
the hearts of men;  
It is vain to look for friendship for it will not  
come again.

Oh, the world is full of kindness, thronged with  
men who want to be  
Of some service to their neighbors and they'll  
run to you or me  
When we're needing their assistance if we've  
lived upon the square,  
But they'll spurn us in our trouble if we've  
always been unfair.

It's an easy world to live in; all you really need  
to do  
Is the decent thing and proper and then friends  
will flock to you;  
But let dishonor trail you and some stormy day  
you'll find  
To your heart's supremest sorrow that you've  
made the world unkind.

## THE STATES

There is no star within the flag  
That's brighter than its brothers,  
And when of Michigan I brag,  
I'm boasting of the others.  
Just which is which no man can say —  
One star for every state  
Gleams brightly on our flag to-day,  
And every one is great.

The stars that gem the skies at night  
May differ in degree,  
And some are pale and some are bright,  
But in our flag we see  
A sky of blue wherein the stars  
Are equal in design;  
Each has the radiance of Mars  
And all are yours and mine.

The glory that is Michigan's  
Is Colorado's too;  
The same sky Minnesota spans,  
The same sun warms it through;  
And all are one beneath the flag,  
A common hope is ours;  
Our country is the mountain crag,  
The valley and its flowers.

The land we love lies far away  
As well as close at hand;  
He has no vision who would say:  
  *This* state's my native land.  
Though sweet the charms he knows the best,  
  Deep down within his heart  
The farthest east, the farthest west  
  Of him must be a part.

There is no star within the flag  
  That's brighter than its brothers;  
So when of Michigan I brag  
  I'm boasting of the others.  
We share alike one purpose true;  
  One common end awaits;  
We must in all we dream or do  
  Remain *United States*.

## THE OBLIGATION OF FRIENDSHIP

You ought to be fine for the sake of the folks  
Who think you are fine.  
If others have faith in you doubly you're bound  
To stick to the line.  
It's not only on you that dishonor descends:  
You can't hurt yourself without hurting your  
friends.

You ought to be true for the sake of the folks  
Who believe you are true.  
You never should stoop to a deed that your  
friends  
Think you wouldn't do.  
If you're false to yourself, be the blemish but  
small,  
You have injured your friends; you've been false  
to them all.

For friendship, my boy, is a bond between men  
That is founded on truth:  
It believes in the best of the ones that it loves,  
Whether old man or youth;  
And the stern rule it lays down for me and for  
you  
Is to be what our friends think we are, through  
and through.

## UNDER THE SKIN OF MEN

Did you ever sit down and talk with men  
In a serious sort of a way,  
On their views of life and ponder then  
On all that they have to say?  
If not, you should in some quiet hour;  
It's a glorious thing to do:  
For you'll find that back of the pomp and power  
Most men have a goal in view.

They'll tell you then that their aim is not  
The clink of the yellow gold;  
That not in the worldly things they've got  
Would they have their stories told.  
They'll say the joys that they treasure most  
Are their good friends, tried and true,  
And an honest name for their own to boast  
And peace when the day is through.

I've talked with men and I think I know  
What's under the toughened skin.  
I've seen their eyes grow bright and glow  
With the fire that burns within.  
And back of the gold and back of the fame  
And back of the selfish strife,  
In most men's breasts you'll find the flame  
Of the nobler things of life.

## THE FINER THOUGHT

How fine it is at night to say:  
“ I have not wronged a soul to-day.  
I have not by a word or deed,  
In any breast sowed anger’s seed,  
Or caused a fellow being pain;  
Nor is there on my crest a stain  
That shame has left. In honor’s way,  
With head erect, I’ve lived this day.”

When night slips down and day departs  
And rest returns to weary hearts,  
How fine it is to close the book  
Of records for the day, and look  
Once more along the traveled mile  
And find that all has been worth while;  
To say: “ In honor I have toiled;  
My plume is spotless and unsoiled.”

Yet cold and stern a man may be  
Retaining his integrity;  
And he may pass from day to day  
A spirit dead, in living clay,  
Observing strictly morals, laws,  
Yet serving but a selfish cause;  
So it is not enough to say:  
“ I have not stooped to shame to-day!”

It is a finer, nobler thought  
When day is done and night has brought  
The contemplative hours and sweet,  
And rest to weary hearts and feet,  
If man can stand in truth and say:  
“I have been useful here to-day.  
Back there is one I chanced to see  
With hope newborn because of me.

“This day in honor I have toiled;  
My shining crest is still unsoiled,  
But on the mile I leave behind  
Is one who says that I was kind;  
And someone hums a cheerful song  
Because I chanced to come along.”  
Sweet rest at night that man shall own  
Who has not lived his day alone.

## STUCK

I'm up against it day by day,  
My ignorance is distressing;  
The things I don't know on the way  
I'm busily confessing.  
Time was I used to think I knew  
Some useful bits of knowledge  
And could be sure of one or two  
Real facts I'd gleaned in college.  
But I'm unfitted for the task  
Of answering things my boy can ask.

Now, who can answer queries queer  
That four-year-olds can think up?  
And tell in simple phrase and clear  
Why fishes do not drink up  
The water in the streams and lakes,  
Or where the wind is going,  
And tell exactly how God makes  
The roses that are growing?  
I'm sure I cannot satisfy  
Each little when, and how, and why.

Had I the wisdom of a sage  
Possessed of all the learning  
That can be gleaned from printed page  
From bookworm's closest turning,  
That eager knowledge-seeking lad  
That questions me so gayly

Could still go round and boast he had  
With queries floored me daily.  
He'll stick, I'll bet, in less than five  
Brief minutes any man alive.

### ETERNAL FRIENDSHIP

Who once has had a friend has found  
The link 'twixt mortal and divine;  
Though now he sleeps in hallowed ground,  
He lives in memory's sacred shrine;  
And there he freely moves about,  
A spirit that has quit the clay,  
And in the times of stress and doubt  
Sustains his friend throughout the day.

No friend we love can ever die;  
The outward form but disappears;  
I know that all my friends are nigh  
Whenever I am moved to tears.  
And when my strength and hope are gone,  
The friends, no more, that once I knew,  
Return to cheer and urge me on  
Just as they always used to do.

They whisper to me in the dark  
Kind words of counsel and of cheer;  
When hope has flickered to a spark  
I feel their gentle spirits near.

And Oh! because of them I strive  
With all the strength that I can call  
To keep their friendship still alive  
And to be worthy of them all.

Death does not end our friendships true;  
We all are debtors to the dead;  
There, wait on everything we do  
The splendid souls who've gone ahead.  
To them I hold that we are bound  
By double pledges to be fine.  
Who once has had a friend has found  
The link 'twixt mortal and divine.

## FAITH

I believe in the world and its bigness and  
splendor:  
That most of the hearts beating round us are  
tender;  
That days are but footsteps and years are but  
miles  
That lead us to beauty and singing and smiles:  
That roses that blossom and toilers that plod  
Are filled with the glorious spirit of God.

I believe in the purpose of everything living:  
That taking is but the forerunner of giving;

That strangers are friends that we some day  
may meet;  
And not all the bitter can equal the sweet;  
That creeds are but colors, and no man has  
said  
That God loves the yellow rose more than the  
red.

I believe in the path that to-day I am treading,  
That I shall come safe through the dangers I'm  
dreading;  
That even the scoffer shall turn from his ways  
And some day be won back to trust and to  
praise;  
That the leaf on the tree and the thing we call  
Man  
Are sharing alike in His infinite plan.

I believe that all things that are living and  
breathing  
Some richness of beauty to earth are bequeath-  
ing;  
That all that goes out of this world leaves  
behind  
Some duty accomplished for mortals to find;  
That the humblest of creatures our praise is  
deserving,  
For it, with the wisest, the Master is serving.

Nobody hates me more than I;  
No enemy have I to-day  
That I so bravely must defy;  
There are no foes along my way,  
However bitter they may be,  
So powerful to injure me  
As I am, nor so quick to spoil  
The beauty of my bit of toil.

Nobody harms me more than I;  
No one is meaner unto me;  
Of all the foes that pass me by  
I am the worst one that I see.  
I am the dangerous man to fear;  
I am the cause of sorrow here;  
Of all men 'gainst my hopes inclined  
I am myself the most unkind.

I do more harmful things to me  
Than all the men who seem to hate;  
I am the fellow that should be  
More dreaded than the works of fate.  
I am the one that I must fight  
With all my will and all my might;  
My foes are better friends to me  
Than I have ever proved to be.

I am the careless foe and mean;  
I am the selfish rival too;  
My enmity to me is seen  
In almost everything I do.  
More courage it requires to beat  
Myself, than all the foes I meet;  
I am more traitorous to me  
Than other men could ever be.

In every struggle I have lost  
I am the one that was to blame;  
My weaknesses cannot be glossed  
By glib excuses. I was lame.  
I that would dare for fame or pelf  
Am far less daring with myself.  
I care not who my foes may be,  
I am my own worst enemy.

## THE THINGS THAT HAVEN'T BEEN DONE BEFORE

The things that haven't been done before,  
Those are the things to try;  
Columbus dreamed of an unknown shore  
At the rim of the far-flung sky,  
And his heart was bold and his faith was strong  
As he ventured in dangers new,  
And he paid no heed to the jeering throng  
Or the fears of the doubting crew.

The many will follow the beaten track  
With guideposts on the way,  
They live and have lived for ages back  
With a chart for every day.  
Someone has told them it's safe to go  
On the road he has traveled o'er,  
And all that they ever strive to know  
Are the things that were known before.

A few strike out, without map or chart,  
Where never a man has been,  
From the beaten paths they draw apart  
To see what no man has seen.  
There are deeds they hunger alone to do;  
Though battered and bruised and sore,  
They blaze the path for the many, who  
Do nothing not done before.

The things that haven't been done before  
Are the tasks worth while to-day;  
Are you one of the flock that follows, or  
Are you one that shall lead the way?  
Are you one of the timid souls that quail  
At the jeers of a doubting crew,  
Or dare you, whether you win or fail,  
Strike out for a goal that's new?

### REVENGE

If I had hatred in my heart toward my fellow  
man,  
If I were pressed to do him ill, to conjure up a  
plan  
To wound him sorely and to rob his days of all  
their joy,  
I'd wish his wife would go away and take their  
little boy.

I'd waste no time on curses vague, nor try to  
take his gold,  
Nor seek to shatter any plan that he might  
dearly hold.  
A crueler revenge than that for him I would  
bespeak:  
I'd wish his wife and little one might leave him  
for a week.

I'd wish him all the loneliness that comes with  
loss of those  
Who fill his life with laughter and contentment  
and repose.  
I'd wish him empty rooms at night and mocking  
stairs to squeak  
That neither wife nor little boy will greet him  
for a week.

If I despised my fellow man, I'd make my  
hatred known  
By wishing him a week or two of living all  
alone;  
I'd let him know the torture that is mine to  
bear to-day,  
For Buddy and his mother now are miles and  
miles away.

## PROMOTION

Promotion comes to him who sticks  
Unto his work and never kicks,  
Who watches neither clock nor sun  
To tell him when his task is done;  
Who toils not by a stated chart,  
Defining to a jot his part,  
But gladly does a little more  
Than he's remunerated for.

The man, in factory or shop,  
Who rises quickly to the top,  
Is he who gives what can't be bought:  
Intelligent and careful thought.

No one can say just when begins  
The service that promotion wins,  
Or when it ends; 'tis not defined  
By certain hours or any kind  
Of system that has been devised;  
Merit cannot be systemized.  
It is at work when it's at play;  
It serves each minute of the day;  
'Tis always at its post, to see  
New ways of help and use to be.  
Merit from duty never slinks,  
Its cardinal virtue is — it thinks!

Promotion comes to him who tries  
Not solely for a selfish prize,  
But day by day and year by year  
Holds his employer's interests dear.  
Who measures not by what he earns  
The sum of labor he returns,  
Nor counts his day of toiling through  
Till he's done all that he can do.  
His strength is not of muscle bred,  
But of the heart and of the head.  
The man who would the top attain  
Must demonstrate he has a brain.

## EXPECTATION

Most folks, as I've noticed, in pleasure an' strife,

Are always expecting too much out of life.

They wail an' they fret

Just because they don't get

The best o' the sunshine, the fairest o' flowers,

The finest o' features, the strongest o' powers;

They whine an' they whimper an' curse an' condemn,

Coz life isn't always bein' partial to them.

Notwithstandin' the pain an' the sufferin' they see,

They cling to the notion that they should go free:

That they shouldn't share

In life's trouble an' care

But should always be happy an' never perplexed,

An' never discouraged or beaten or vexed.

When life treats 'em roughly an' jolts 'em with care,

They seem to imagine it's bein' unfair.

It's a curious notion folks hold in their pride,

That their souls should never be tested or tried;

That others must mourn

An' be sick an' forlorn

'An' stand by the biers of their loved ones an'  
    weep,

But life from such sorrows their bosoms must  
    keep.

Oh, they mustn't know what it means to be sad,  
Or they'll wail that the treatment they're gettin'  
    is bad.

Now life as I view it means pleasure an' pain,  
An' laughter an' weepin' an' sunshine an' rain,  
    An' takin' an' givin';  
    An' all who are livin'

Must face it an' bear it the best that they can  
Believin' great Wisdom is workin' the plan.  
An' no one should ever complain it's unfair  
Because at the moment he's tastin' despair.

## HARD WORK

One day, in ages dark and dim,  
    A toiler, weary, worn and faint,  
Who found his task too much for him,  
    Gave voice unto a sad complaint.  
And seeking emphasis to give  
    Unto his trials (day ill-starred!)  
Coupled to "work" this adjective,  
    This little word of terror: *Hard*.

And from that day to this has work  
Its frightening description worn;  
'Tis spoken daily by the shirk,  
The first cloud on the sky at morn.  
To-day when there are tasks to do,  
Save that we keep ourselves on guard  
With fearful doubtings them we view,  
And think and speak of them as hard.

That little but ill-chosen word  
Has wrought great havoc with men's souls,  
Has chilled the hearts ambition stirred  
And held the pass to splendid goals.  
Great dreams have faded and been lost,  
Fine youth by it been sadly marred  
As plants beneath a withering frost,  
Because men thought and whispered: "Hard."

Let's think of work in terms of hope  
And speak of it with words of praise,  
And tell the joy it is to grope  
Along the new, untrodden ways!  
Let's break this habit of despair  
And cheerfully our task regard;  
The road to happiness lies there:  
Why think or speak of it as hard?

## GRATITUDE

Be grateful for the kindly friends that walk  
along your way;  
Be grateful for the skies of blue that smile  
from day to day;  
Be grateful for the health you own, the work  
you find to do,  
For round about you there are men less fortu-  
nate than you.

Be grateful for the growing trees, the roses  
soon to bloom,  
The tenderness of kindly hearts that shared your  
days of gloom;  
Be grateful for the morning dew, the grass  
beneath your feet,  
The soft caresses of your babes and all their  
laughter sweet.

Acquire the grateful habit, learn to see how blest  
you are,  
How much there is to gladden life, how little  
life to mar!  
And what if rain shall fall to-day and you with  
grief are sad;  
Be grateful that you can recall the joys that  
you have had.

## A REAL MAN

Men are of two kinds, and he  
Was of the kind I'd like to be.  
Some preach their virtues, and a few  
Express their lives by what they do.  
That sort was he. No flowery phrase  
Or glibly spoken words of praise  
Won friends for him. He wasn't cheap  
Or shallow, but his course ran deep,  
And it was pure. You know the kind,  
Not many in a life you find  
Whose deeds outrun their words so far  
That more than what they seem they are.

There are two kinds of lies as well:  
The kind you live, the ones you tell.  
Back through his years from age to youth  
He never acted one untruth.  
Out in the open light he fought  
And didn't care what others thought  
Nor what they said about his fight  
If he believed that he was right.  
The only deeds he ever hid  
Were acts of kindness that he did.

What speech he had was plain and blunt.  
His was an unattractive front.  
Yet children loved him; babe and boy  
Played with the strength he could employ,

Without one fear, and they are fleet  
To sense injustice and deceit.  
No back door gossip linked his name  
With any shady tale of shame.  
He did not have to compromise  
With evil-doers, shrewd and wise,  
And let them ply their vicious trade  
Because of some past escapade.

Men are of two kinds, and he  
Was of the kind I'd like to be.  
No door at which he ever knocked  
Against his manly form was locked.  
If ever man on earth was free  
And independent, it was he.  
No broken pledge lost him respect,  
He met all men with head erect,  
And when he passed I think there went  
A soul to yonder firmament  
So white, so splendid and so fine  
It came almost to God's design.

## THE NEIGHBORLY MAN

Some are eager to be famous, some are striving  
to be great,  
Some are toiling to be leaders of their nation  
or their state,  
And in every man's ambition, if we only under-  
stood,  
There is much that's fine and splendid; every  
hope is mostly good.  
So I cling unto the notion that contented I  
will be  
If the men upon life's pathway find a needed  
friend in me.

I rather like to putter 'round the walks and  
yards of life,  
To spray at night the roses that are burned and  
browned with strife;  
To eat a frugal dinner, but always to have a  
chair  
For the unexpected stranger that my simple  
meal would share.  
I don't care to be a traveler, I would rather be  
the one  
Sitting calmly by the roadside helping weary  
travelers on.

I'd like to be a neighbor in the good old-fashioned way,  
Finding much to do for others, but not over much to say.  
I like to read the papers, but I do not yearn to see  
What the journal of the morning has been moved to say of me;  
In the silences and shadows I would live my life and die  
And depend for fond remembrance on some grateful passers-by.

I guess I wasn't fashioned for the brilliant things of earth,  
Wasn't gifted much with talent or designed for special worth,  
But was just sent here to putter with life's little odds and ends  
And keep a simple corner where the stirring highway bends,  
And if folks should chance to linger, worn and weary through the day,  
To do some needed service and to cheer them on their way.

## ROSES

When God first viewed the rose He'd made  
He smiled, and thought it passing fair;  
Upon the bloom His hands He laid,  
And gently blessed each petal there.  
He summoned in His artists then  
And bade them paint, as ne'er before,  
Each petal, so that earthly men  
Might love the rose for evermore.

With Heavenly brushes they began  
And one with red limned every leaf,  
To signify the love of man;  
The first rose, white, betokened grief;  
"My rose shall deck the bride," one said  
And so in pink he dipped his brush,  
"And it shall smile beside the dead  
To typify the faded blush."

And then they came unto His throne  
And laid the roses at His feet,  
The crimson bud, the bloom full blown,  
Filling the air with fragrance sweet.  
"Well done, well done!" the Master spake;  
"Henceforth the rose shall bloom on earth:  
One fairer blossom I will make,"  
And then a little babe had birth.

On earth a loving mother lay  
Within a rose-decked room and smiled,  
But from the blossoms turned away  
To gently kiss her little child,  
And then she murmured soft and low,  
“ For beauty, here, a mother seeks.  
None but the Master made, I know,  
The roses in a baby’s cheeks.”

### THE JUNK BOX

My father often used to say:  
“ My boy don’t throw a thing away:  
You’ll find a use for it some day.”

So in a box he stored up things,  
Bent nails, old washers, pipes and rings,  
And bolts and nuts and rusty springs.

Despite each blemish and each flaw,  
Some use for everything he saw;  
With things material, this was law.

And often when he’d work to do,  
He searched the junk box through and through  
And found old stuff as good as new.

And I have often thought since then,  
That father did the same with men;  
He knew he'd need their help again.

It seems to me he understood  
That men, as well as iron and wood,  
May broken be and still be good.

Despite the vices he'd display  
He never threw a man away,  
But kept him for another day.

A human junk box is this earth  
And into it we're tossed at birth,  
To wait the day we'll be of worth.

Though bent and twisted, weak of will,  
And full of flaws and lacking skill,  
Some service each can render still.

### THE BOY THAT WAS

When the hair about the temples starts to show  
the signs of gray,  
And a fellow realizes that he's wandering far  
away  
From the pleasures of his boyhood and his  
youth, and never more  
Will know the joy of laughter as he did in days  
of yore,

Oh, it's then he starts to thinking of a stubby  
little lad  
With a face as brown as berries and a soul  
supremely glad.

When a gray-haired dreamer wanders down the  
lanes of memory  
And forgets the living present for the time of  
"used-to-be,"  
He takes off his shoes and stockings, and he  
throws his coat away,  
And he's free from all restrictions, save the rules  
of manly play.  
He may be in richest garments, but bareheaded  
in the sun  
He forgets his proud successes and the riches  
he has won.

Oh, there's not a man alive but that would give  
his all to be  
The stubby little fellow that in dreamland he  
can see,  
And the splendors that surround him and the  
joys about him spread  
Only seem to rise to taunt him with the boyhood  
that has fled.  
When the hair about the temples starts to show  
Time's silver stain,  
Then the richest man that's living yearns to be  
a boy again.

## AS FALL THE LEAVES

As fall the leaves, so drop the days  
In silence from the tree of life;  
Born for a little while to blaze  
In action in the heat of strife,  
And then to shrivel with Time's blast  
And fade forever in the past.

In beauty once the leaf was seen;  
To all it offered gentle shade;  
Men knew the splendor of its green  
That cheered them so, would quickly fade:  
And quickly, too, must pass away  
All that is splendid of to-day.

To try to keep the leaves were vain:  
Men understand that they must fall;  
Why should they bitterly complain  
When sorrows come to one and all?  
Why should they mourn the passing day  
That must depart along the way?

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PART TWO

LIFE'S HIGHWAY



# Life's Highway

By  
Edgar A. Guest



The Reilly & Lee Co.  
Chicago

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## Life's Highway

'Tis good to walk life's highway wide,  
    Past cabin low and steeple,  
And meet along the countryside  
    The smiling, friendly people.  
For wheresoe'er a man may fare,  
    Though rough or smooth the mile is,  
Or bright the day or dark and gray,  
    He'll come to where a smile is.

There's sorrow for the hearts of all  
    Before the journey closes;  
But Junetime lines full many a wall  
    With pink and scarlet roses,  
And overhead the blue skies spread  
    A canopy of splendor  
'Neath which we fare, despite our care,  
    To welcomes warm and tender.

And be the highway short or long  
    Which stretches out before us,  
Man's ear will catch the heartening song  
    Of thrush or robin chorus.

By stream and brook on scenes he'll look,  
Illuming Nature's pages  
To glad his eye as he goes by,  
Repeated through the ages.

The poorest man a friend may find,  
The richest man no truer;  
For kings, whom soldiers march behind,  
God's sky is made no bluer.  
'Spite care and strife, the joys of life,  
The beauties richly blended,  
And sun and star and blossoms are  
For all mankind intended.

## *One Kindly Deed*

He went his way and never knew  
How much his words had thrilled him through,  
He'd merely stopped upon the street  
To buy a newsboy's printed sheet  
And something put it in his mind  
That day to be a little kind.

"My boy, 'tis cold you look," said he.  
"Your ears are red as they can be.  
Just step in here, you bright-eyed chap,  
I'll buy for you a winter cap,  
And since all day you tread the street  
I'll put new rubbers on your feet."

He never knew just why the whim  
For such a kindness came to him,  
But he was happy for the day  
And whistling went upon his way;  
Took train for home and never guessed  
What seed he'd planted in a breast.

Day after day, year after year,  
Watched one for him to re-appear.  
The boy to manhood grown still scanned  
The faces of the public, and  
Cherished the hope that ere life's end  
He'd meet once more his kindly friend.

They never met. But in his name  
That boy when he a man became  
On many a blustery, wintry day  
Gave caps and overshoes away  
In memory of the passing whim  
Of one who'd been so kind to him.

## *The Choice*

And one man said:  
"All hope is dead  
    And I wish that I were, too!  
For rough is the way  
And the skies are gray  
    And I can't get work to do.  
I've lost the things which I thought were mine,  
And it's now no use for the sun to shine."

In similar straits,  
Betrayed by the fates  
    And stripped of his worldly gear,  
Another man said:  
"Well, I'm far from dead,  
    And I don't want to die this year!  
There's a lot proved false which I thought was true,  
But I want to be here when the sun breaks through."

All men must choose  
Of these opposite views,  
    And it's easy enough to fail,  
If you're willing to quit  
You can argue for it  
    With a truly deplorable tale,  
But always the difficult thing to do  
Is to stick to a problem and see it through.

## *Service*

To prove their wisdom and their strength  
They builded pyramids of old,  
But long ere time had run its length  
The things were stark and still and cold.

To God they raised both tower and spire,  
And lavished on them wealth and skill,  
Lit adoration's incense fire,  
But round the steps are beggars still.

By tedious toil the stones were piled,  
At frightful cost were temples made,  
Yet many a mother of a child  
Looks out on life and is afraid.

I wandered through the ruins grim  
And in my mind the fancy ran  
That God's best love must go to him  
Who labors for his fellow-man.

## *The Blue Spruce*

That Colorado spruce you see,  
Well, he's a friend o' mine,  
For he's been growing old with me  
These last eight years or nine.  
And every spring for my delight  
He dons a silver dress  
And seems to add unto his height  
A foot or slightly less.

Some call him Colorado blue,  
With that I quarrel not.  
I only know whate'er his hue  
I like his ways a lot.  
Sturdy and straight and tall he stands  
Against what winds may blow,  
And sometimes holds his arms and hands  
To catch the falling snow.

When our acquaintance first began  
I'm sure he looked at me  
And wondered if I were a man  
Who could befriend a tree.  
But as the weeks and months slipped by  
Such doubting was destroyed,  
And under clear or stormy sky  
Each other we've enjoyed.

I never walk about the place  
But what I stop to chat.  
Sometimes I tell him to his face,  
"Old boy, you're getting fat!"  
And sometimes, in his friendly way,  
That spruce looks down on me.  
"You're not as slim," he seems to say,  
"As once you used to be."

## *The Proof of a Golfer*

The proof of the pudding's the eating, they say,  
But the proof of a golfer is not  
The number of strokes which he takes in a day  
Or the skill he puts into a shot;  
There is more to the game than the scores which  
you make,  
Here's a truth which all golfers endorse;  
You don't prove your worth by the shots which you  
take,  
But the care which you take of the course.

A golfer is more than a ball-driving brute,  
He is more than a mug-hunting czar;  
To be known as a golfer you don't have to shoot  
The course of your home club in par;  
But you do have to love every blade of the grass,  
Every inch of the fairways and greens,  
And if you don't take care of the course as you pass  
You are not what "a good golfer" means.

Just watch a good golfer some day when you're out  
And behold what he does as he plays;  
He never goes on leaving divots about,  
Till the grass is put back—there he stays!

Observe him in traps as he stands for his shot,  
Then note, when the ball has been played  
That he never unthinkingly turns from the spot  
Till he's covered the footprints he made.

You may brag of your scores and may boast of  
your skill,  
You may think as a golfer you're good,  
But if footprints you make in the traps you don't  
fill,  
You don't love the game as you should;  
For your attitude unto the sport you enjoy  
Isn't proven by brilliance or force;  
The proof of a golfer—now get this, my boy!  
Is the care which he takes of the course.

## *Destiny*

Who knows what lies behind us all  
That we who live to-day  
Might train a rose along a wall  
And see our children play?

We cannot mark each deed or thought  
In some long vanished year  
By which the present earth was wrought  
For us to labor here.

But all we find along our way  
To times by-gone we owe,  
The world is as it is to-day,  
Because men made it so.

And since to-day must be the sum  
Of all that was before,  
Our lives may hold what is to come  
When we shall be no more.

Blindly perforce the road we tread,  
And cope with good and ill  
That one a thousand years ahead  
His little place may fill.

So strangely is God's purpose planned,  
That none of us can see  
Into the great uncharted land  
Which men call destiny.

Now we are here and know not why,  
The end, no man can say;  
The answer to our lives may lie  
Long centuries away.

## *Innocence*

I think perhaps we'll never know  
Just why the children charm us so,  
But it may be, when gathered near  
They never look on us to sneer  
Or think of us as people queer.

They do not come some fault to find  
Or seek for guile in motives kind,  
They do not, as the wise and old,  
Let friendship die and love grow cold  
From tales some gossip may have told.

The charm of childhood must be this:  
It's much too young for prejudice;  
Too young to hate; too young to see  
How frail the strongest man may be  
Or question his integrity.

The children run to us as though  
We grown-ups all were good to know.  
Lacking the judgment or the sense  
To think our faults of consequence,  
They love us in their innocence.

## *Determination*

I'll see it through, whate'er the danger be.  
One death is all that God assigns to me.  
I'll stand erect against the odds and shout:  
"I may be whipped, but will not turn about!"

I will not play the coward! Fail I may,  
But at the post of duty I will stay.  
Nor dread of loss, nor fear of being hurt,  
Nor softening pride shall tempt me to desert.

I'll play the man! What if the way seems long?  
I will not whimper that all care is wrong.  
Blunder I may, but none shall ever cry  
I died a failure, since I would not try.

## *The Score*

The youth who had the ball  
Ran and dodged, eluding all  
Who would bar his forward progress.  
Him the people rose to cheer.  
His the touchdown; his the glory,  
His the headlines in the story,  
For the people seldom notice  
Those who keep the pathway clear,  
But upon the board, it seems,  
That boy's score becomes the team's.

Harvard, Michigan or Yale!  
'Tis the scoreboard tells the tale.  
Though to one lad go the cheering  
And the plaudits and the songs,  
When at last the goal is made  
And the figures are displayed  
It is plain to every member  
Of the team that score belongs.  
Every substitute out there  
In that goal has had a share.

We have honored long, and will,  
Individual strength and skill,  
But who knows how many labor  
That one great shall find his place,

And the score that is displayed  
Of some progress man has made  
In the end becomes the glory  
Of the humblest of his race.  
And the triumphs of the strong  
At the last to all belong.

## *Family Prayer for Difficult Days*

Lord, grant our little family  
The strength to bear life's tasks together;  
Let us brave-hearted servants be,  
And give us faith for stormy weather;  
Grant us the courage for our tasks,  
Whatever toil the morning asks.

Lord, bless our happy circle small,  
Let neither care nor loss affright us.  
Each evening when the shadows fall,  
May love and comradeship unite us.  
Though steep the hill and rough the way,  
Let us not grumble through the day.

Lord, keep us safe from greed and hate  
And all the shams which would destroy us;  
Teach us against the whims of Fate  
To keep our hearts serene and joyous;  
And when the evening comes, content,  
Grant us to call the day well spent.

## *A Christmas Bit*

If I were Santa Claus this year  
I'd change his methods for the day;  
I'd give to all the children here  
But there are things I'd take away.

I'd enter every home to steal,  
With giving I'd not be content.  
I'd find the heart-aches men conceal  
And take them with me when I went.

I'd rob the invalid of pain;  
I'd steal the poor man's weight of care;  
I'd take the prisoner's ball and chain  
And every crime which sent him there.

I'd take the mother's fears away,  
The doubts which often fret the wise—  
And all should wake on Christmas Day  
With happy hearts and shining eyes.

For old and young this is my prayer:  
God bless us all this Christmas Day  
And give us strength our tasks to bear,  
And take our bitter griefs away!

## *True Delight*

I know no greater joys than these:  
The laughter of a child,  
The fragrance of the summer breeze,  
A home kept undefiled.

Books chosen from the crowds with care;  
Friends just as truly made,  
The comfort of an earnest prayer,  
The games at evening played.

A patch of lawn, a garden small,  
And in the evening gloam  
As the long twilight shadows fall  
A dog to wag you home.

Let great men ride their pompous way,  
Still must their souls be glum,  
Unless at every close of day  
To these true joys they come.

## *Thought for the Brave*

Take life as you find it,  
With the great past all behind it  
And a greater future waiting  
For strong men to come along;  
With its weight of hurt and sorrow  
And perhaps some new to-morrow  
That shall bring a joy to fruitage  
Or shall right an ancient wrong.

Stand up to life and face it!  
If the hour be good, embrace it!  
If the hour be long and darksome  
Brave the danger best you may;  
For the warp of life is sadness  
And the woof is made of gladness  
And 'tis poor of mind the man is  
Who wears threadbare week or day.

Tread life's road and never falter.  
There is little sighs will alter.  
For no man the weather changes  
And for none will cares depart,  
When the blow falls man must take it!  
Life's what God and mortals make it—  
So for pleasure's hour be grateful,  
And for trial stout of heart.

## *Change of Mind*

Time was with pride I used to say:  
"I hope to leave him rich some day.  
I hope he'll never know the cares  
    Which I have had to bear."  
And saying this, it seemed that I  
Believed that when I came to die,  
My rest would sweeter be to know  
    My child was free from care.

To-day I know parental pride  
Was dreaming on its foolish side,  
And building pictures fair to see,  
    But bitterly untrue.  
Since when have sons to manhood grown  
On private incomes of their own?  
Since when have sons their merit proved  
    Without a task to do?

And so no more I shout aloud  
From motives filial and proud;  
I want to save my boy from pain  
    And doubt and loss and care.  
No! No! My cry is this to-day:  
I want to teach my boy the way  
To stand to life and work and think  
    And bravely do his share.

## *Courage*

This is courage: to remain  
Brave and patient under pain;  
Cool and calm and firm to stay  
In the presence of dismay;  
Not to flinch when foes attack,  
Even though you're beaten back;  
Still to cling to what is right,  
When the wrong possesses might.

This is courage: to be true  
To the best men see in you;  
To remember, tempest-tossed,  
Not to whimper, "All is lost!"  
But to battle to the end  
While you still have strength to spend;  
Not to cry that hope is gone  
While you've life to carry on.

This is courage: to endure  
Hurt and loss you cannot cure;  
Patiently and undismayed,  
Facing life still unafraid;  
Glad to live and glad to take  
Bravely for your children's sake,  
Burdens they would have to bear  
If you fled and ceased to care.

## *The Happy Toad*

As I was walking down the road  
I met an ugly, grinning toad,  
Who squatted in the shade and said:  
"I never wish that I were dead.  
Wherever I may chance to stray  
I find rich food along the way;  
I have no dreams I can't fulfill;  
I owe no other toad a bill;  
In slimy places I abide,  
But with them I am satisfied.  
My little children I forsook  
As tadpoles in a nearby brook;  
I know not where they are nor care.  
I have no burdens I must bear.  
At night I never lie awake.  
My bitterest enemy is the snake.  
I have no taxes, no beliefs,  
No cares, ambitions, hopes or griefs;  
No clothes to buy, no cash to lose,  
No tools that I must learn to use.  
I sing no dirges, tell no jokes.  
I'm just a jumping toad who croaks.  
Contented, placid, happy I  
Shall be until the day I die."

\*       \*       \*       \*

Yet, as I trudged along the road,  
I thought, "Who wants to be a toad?"

## *The Birch Tree*

Out of a jutting rock, wind blown,  
A birch tree braves the world alone.  
**A crevice in the granite first**  
Captured the seed; a wave immersed  
That tiny embryo. The sun  
Warmed it and thus was life begun.

Scant food the passing breezes give  
And yet that tree contrives to live!  
Cruel the clutch of granite gray,  
Yet the brave roots from day to day  
Into the great stone deeper creep,  
A surer hold on life to keep.

Twisted and bent some limbs appear,  
But still undaunted year by year  
Those roots in cheerless channels sunk  
Courageously support the trunk  
And green against the lake and sky,  
A birch tree catches every eye!

Man thinks he knows what nature wills.  
But much he plants the winter kills,  
While far away from human care  
And on a cliff by storms swept bare,  
Denied the commonest of needs,  
A birch tree silently succeeds!

## *Zinnias*

Old-fashioned Zinnias seem to me  
Like certain patient friends and true,  
Who seek no words of flattery  
Nor any praise for what they do,  
But are the first when sorrows fall  
With offerings of help to call.

Some friendships and some flowers appear  
Too pale and delicate to last.  
Who loves them dwells in constant fear  
Of thoughtless word or icy blast.  
The least contrary wind may end  
The fragile bloom or fragile friend.

But Zinnias have a sturdier way.  
No pampering from friends they ask.  
Wherever planted they will stay  
And blithely go about their task.  
Whatever winds or storms descend,  
On Zinnias you can depend.

## *Prayer*

Strengthen us, Lord, that we may hold  
The faith when winds blow bleak and cold!

We who have sat beneath the trees  
And quaffed our sparkling drinks at ease;

Have known all comforts and delights,  
Days of employment, restful nights,

Friendships and happy, blazing fires,  
Contentment and fulfilled desires,

Found serving Thee an easy task  
When there was little men could ask.

But now, Oh, Lord, our fires burn low,  
The cold, harsh winds of failure blow,

Our needs are great! Good Lord, we pray:  
Grant us the courage for the day,

The heart to struggle as we must,  
The faith, though prostrate in the dust,

That we shall, braving care and doubt,  
At last work mankind's problems out.

## *At Her Wedding*

I came across 'em, by the stair,  
Those two old women simpering there,  
Sniffling, as if they both had colds,  
And were a pair of nine-year olds.

"What's wrong," said I, "and why these tears?  
You've thought about this day for years,  
And now it's come, why cry this way?  
Remember, it's her wedding day!"

"I know," said Aunt Eliza, "I  
Know very well I shouldn't cry,  
But—" here the other aunt began,  
"You can't explain it to a man,  
Nor can you possibly reveal  
The dreadful things we women feel.  
Men think a wedding should be gay,  
And so they never cry this way!"

"Oh, bawl your heads off!" I replied,  
"I'm on my way to kiss the bride,"  
And left that funny red-nosed pair  
Still sorrowfully sniffling there,  
But at her door, I seemed to note  
A curious tightening round my throat,  
And had to stop, to my surprise,  
To wipe some tear drops from my eyes.

## *The Ordinary Folks*

Just an ordinary man, eight and forty to the day,  
With a pair of stout-legged children starting up-  
wards on life's way  
And the mother of them mending little garments  
when they fray.

Just an ordinary house on an ordinary street  
Where a grocer and a druggist and a foundry fore-  
man meet,  
And the women folks are busy cooking meals for  
men to eat.

Just an ordinary yard filled with ordinary things,  
A clump of shasta daisies and nasturtiums climbing  
strings,  
A patch of grass to sprawl on, and a happy bird  
that sings!

Why these ordinary lines in this ordinary way  
To the ordinary people we encounter every day?  
Just because they stand to duty when some softer  
people stray.

## *The Fighter*

And if the fight I lose, what then?  
The world is filled with stronger men  
Than I, whose blows I cannot meet.  
There's no disgrace in such defeat  
Unless, perchance, afraid to fall,  
I will not face my foe at all.

Lord, spare me that! The stronger man  
May down me, since he knows he can.  
The odds are with him. At a blow  
He has the power to lay me low,  
But till I cannot raise a fist  
His every onslaught I'd resist.

I would not crawl upon the dust  
Until I'm helpless and I must.  
Outmatched I may be, but I'd fight  
With all my courage and my might,  
That he who puts me on my back  
Shall know 'tis only strength I lack.

Some say 'tis wisdom oft to flee.  
But judge of that each man must be,  
And sometimes for his self-respect  
A man must stand with head erect  
And take the cruel blows which fall,  
Rather than fail to fight at all.

## *Because He Lived*

Because he lived, next door a child  
To see him coming often smiled,  
And thought him her devoted friend  
Who gladly gave her coins to spend.

Because he lived, a neighbor knew  
A clump of tall delphiniums blue  
And oriental poppies red  
He'd given for a garden bed.

Because he lived, a man in need  
Was grateful for a kindly deed  
And ever after tried to be  
As thoughtful and as fine as he.

Because he lived, ne'er great or proud  
Or known to all the motley crowd,  
A few there were whose tents were pitched  
Near his who found their lives enriched.

## *The Prodigal's Return*

Lord, now the prodigal son returns  
From the crowded street where the bright light  
    burns

Broken by pleasure and ready for toil;  
Lord, he comes back to his native soil,  
Back to the old roof, back to the door  
Asking for pardon and blessing once more.

Lord, now the prodigal son again  
Discovers that trust in earth's riches is vain;  
Back he comes to the old-time truth  
His mother taught in his days of youth,  
Back to the courage in times of care  
To the old-time faith and the old-time prayer.

Lord, the prodigal son comes home,  
Who was lured by fortune and fame to roam;  
Back he comes to the simpler things,  
To the cheery song, which the kettle sings;  
The joy of life 'neath the old home roof  
And the peace of mind which is failure-proof.

## *Washington*

Privations grim were his to bear  
Long hours of doubt were his to face.  
With faith sublime and courage rare,  
Goalward he set his face.

Some heroes on full-tide are swept  
To glory and the chance they seek,  
But Washington, at slow pace, crept  
Uncheered from week to week.

His was the genius of despair,  
The courage of the bitter doubt.  
He saw men faltering everywhere  
But kept his own heart stout.

Had Washington by sufferings keen  
And envy's rancor been dismayed  
Men's right to freedom might have been  
A century more delayed.

## *Plant A Garden*

If your purse no longer bulges and you've lost your golden treasure,

If at times you think you're lonely and have hungry grown for pleasure,

Don't sit by your hearth and grumble, don't let mind and spirit harden.

If it's thrills of joy you wish for, get to work and plant a garden!

If it's drama that you sigh for, plant a garden and you'll get it.

You will know the thrill of battle fighting foes that will beset it.

If you long for entertainment and for pageantry most glowing,

Plant a garden, and this summer spend your time with green things growing.

If it's comradeship you sigh for, learn the fellowship of daisies.

You will come to know your neighbor by the blossoms that he raises;

If you'd get away from boredom and find new delights to look for,

Learn the joy of budding pansies which you've kept a special nook for.

If you ever think of dying and you fear to wake  
to-morrow,

Plant a garden! It will cure you of your melan-  
cholic sorrow.

Once you've learned to know the peonies, petunias  
and roses,

You will find that every morning some new hap-  
piness discloses.

## *Ten-Year-Old*

Our nine-year-old who went to bed  
Last night has disappeared.  
Some time throughout the night she fled  
Precisely as I'd feared,  
But in her place we now behold  
A little lady, ten years old.

Some think no change in her they see.  
She looks the same, they swear,  
But it is very plain to me  
That seated in her chair  
Where once a nine-year-old held sway  
A miss of ten years rules to-day.

Now, if when children talk you list,  
You'll understand it when  
I say that differences exist  
'Twixt nine years old and ten.  
The elder miss is wiser far  
Than all the nine-year maidens are.

Dear Lord, I pray, to her be kind  
And bless her through the years.  
When childhood must be left behind  
And womanhood appears,  
May she, turned ten years old to-day,  
Follow her mother's lovely way.

## *The Bread Line*

They stood in line and shivered and the man in the middle said:

“Tell me the way to do it. Do I ask them for soup and bread?”

Will they question my name and address?” The two of them looked him o'er

And one of them spoke up quickly: “Have you never been here before?”

“Never,” the poor man answered. The man in the front turned round,

“You've always been used to comfort! Now the pain of the poor you've found.”

And the man just behind said: “Easy! Don't jibe at him any more.

The bread line is cruel business if you've never been there before.

“You and I know no better; we've always worn clothing thin.

We've always been poor and lowly; we can stand in the line and grin,

We are used to this bitter business—but here at this kitchen door

Let's help him to get his breakfast—he's never been here before!”

## *Home-Makers*

A shelter for the children and a place for them to play,

A red geranium or two to keep the corners gay;  
A little patch of grass to trim, a pair of maple trees,

A path that leads up to the door, and home is made of these.

Some windows for the sun to find, and curtains white and neat,

Good neighbors to the right and left and just across the street;

A kettle singing on the stove, a couch that's built for ease,

A dog that wags his tail at you and home is made of these.

The smell of cookies baking or of onions in the stew,

The youngsters racing in and out, as children have to do;

Their footprints on the carpet left where every caller sees,

The simple prayers they say at night, and home is made of these.

High dreams of future greatness when the little  
ones are grown,  
More thought about their welfare than is given to  
your own.  
Long nights of anxious battling 'gainst the course  
of some disease,  
Then times of song and laughter—every home is  
made of these.

## *Doctor's Waiting Room*

'Twas little that I knew of pain  
Until the hurt was mine;  
I rose and went to bed again  
And never had to whine,  
And though I heard that men fell ill  
And had to lie in bed,  
I never thought of illness till  
My appetite had fled.

Then came to me the dreadful day  
Beset with aches and fears,  
The nerves strange tricks began to play  
Which had been good for years.  
So to the doctors wise I went  
To tell my tale of gloom,  
And joined the throng, pale-faced and bent,  
That fills the waiting room.

Still twice a week to them I go,  
And every time I see  
Dyspeptics sitting in a row  
As glum as they can be;  
And when the white-robed nurse comes out  
A stranger's name to call,  
I know just what it's all about,  
For I've been through it all.

I look them over, young and old,  
Humped sadly in their chairs;  
I know what tubes the nurses hold  
And just what use is theirs;  
But this is what I've come to know  
Since I have joined the line,  
There are a lot of folks who go  
Through troubles just like mine.

## *The Safe Golfer*

He is never in a bunker, and he's never in the rough,

A drive of ordinary length to him is quite enough.  
He plays the game the surest way; he never lifts his eye,

And never thinks to risk a shot where danger's apt to lie.

This sort of golfer doesn't know the game's supremest thrill—

He's never driven two hundred yards and what's more, never will.

He slaps the golf ball down the course, a most complacent soul,

Quite satisfied to take a five or six on any hole.

He never stamps his foot in rage or flings his clubs in air.

The man content with safety doesn't very often swear;

He plods his way around the course, but when the game is done

He hasn't had much trouble—and he hasn't had much fun.

## *Difficulties*

Out in the sandy desert where never a cloud is seen,  
You can go for miles and miles without sight of a patch of green,  
And the lizards will slither across your path, but never a bird will sing,  
And never a breeze to your burning brow will the day or the nighttime bring.

Oh, it's rain you need for your garden, it's winter and drifted snow,  
For poor indeed are the tracts of earth which only the sunshine know.  
And poor indeed is the human soul which shrinks from the touch of care  
And seeks to live in some desert place where always the skies are fair.

For growth is born of the cloud and storm and the doubt which the morning brings,  
As to and fro 'twixt care and rest life's pendulum daily swings.  
When pleasure and ease are commonplace, then boredom's sands sweep in  
And man will yearn for a storm to face or a difficult goal to win.

## *The Temptress*

As I went walking down the way I met a pretty miss,

Who boldly looked at me and said: "A lovely day is this!"

Her hair was of a golden brown, her eyes a sparkling blue.

I proudly doffed my hat to her and answered, "Howdy-do!"

She placed her graceful hand in mine and turned to go my way.

Said I: "I have no time to flirt; I've work to do to-day,

I think you'd better run back home." With sadness dropped her chin.

"We'll pass the drug store soon," said she. "I thought you'd take me in."

"Oh, no," said I, "that wouldn't do. The hour is growing late

And I am on my way to town to keep a business date.

Besides, to make it very plain, no time for girls have I!"

At such a cold rebuff from me the maid began to cry.

Now, though I've been a married man for six-and-twenty years,  
I haven't learned in all that time to cope with woman's tears.  
And so I let that temptress fair, who's scarcely seven years old,  
Escort me to the pharmacy where ice cream cones are sold.

## *Flower Courage*

The little garden plot I tread  
To music of the rustling leaves  
At evening, as the sky grows red  
My coming with delight receives.  
The sad and weary world of doubt  
By climbing roses is shut out.

The pretty little blossoms there  
Assail me with no grievous word  
Of burdens difficult to bear.  
Near-by there is a singing bird  
Exultant that he lives to be  
The happy tenant of a tree.

So still and calm the scene appears  
The peonies have no woes to tell.  
No rose remembers happier years  
And on its losses loves to dwell.  
And yet somehow I seem to feel  
Plants suffer hurts they could reveal.

The tenderest little bloom I own  
Has braved the cruel winds and cold;  
Has had to make its way alone  
Against destroying foes and mold.  
Yet nothing in my little yard  
Like man cries out that life is hard.

## *November*

November days are chill and cold  
The trees stand stark and bare  
Like weary men grown gray and old  
Who once were young and fair.

The cheerless rains in torrents fall  
From leaden skies and gray,  
And from the saddened garden wall  
The last vine drops away.

No flash of color blazes now  
To light the garden bed.  
November winds will not allow  
One flower to lift its head.

“Make way for winter!” cries the blast  
And field and lane and hill  
When the harsh gale has blustered past  
Lie strangely cold and still.

I wonder if November likes  
Such tasks of frost and storm,  
Knowing that everywhere it strikes  
Falls beauty’s crumpled form.

## *At the School Exercises*

The fathers and the mothers on a certain happy day  
Are called to watch their children in a pretty little play;  
And the tired old faces glisten with the glory of a smile,  
For everything the youngsters do seems very much worth while.  
The cares are all forgotten and their hearts with rapture beat  
As the little sons and daughters dance about on nimble feet.

On the day of graduation weary eyes aglow with pride,  
Every sign of disappointment bravely seem to put aside.  
One would never guess to see them all the labor of the weeks  
To teach that boy the verses which he now so proudly speaks.  
In that hour of young achievement triumph hides each fault and scar,  
And the fathers and the mothers of their cares forgetful are.

It may be we shall discover when life's last long  
    shadows fall  
We shall go as little children to the Father of us  
    all,  
And in spite of every folly and the sins to which  
    we've turned  
He shall smile upon us proudly for the lessons we  
    have learned.  
By some little deed accomplished we may please  
    Him at the last,  
And repay the loving Father for our failures of the  
    past.

## *Starting Out*

They're planning to get married, and I'm rather glad  
they are,

Although the road ahead to-day seems difficult and  
far.

They've very little money, and I'm rather pleased  
at that.

They'll know the joy of striving in an inexpensive  
flat.

They're launching out together with high hopes and  
courage great.

They'd dreamed of having riches, but they've chosen  
not to wait,

And they're starting out with little—just his salary  
every week—

And they'll have to save and struggle now for every  
gain they seek.

Their bills will give them trouble, and they'll sigh  
for things in vain.

She's going to do the cooking, and I fancy 'twill  
be plain.

He'll help her in the kitchen and he'll dry the dishes,  
too,

And learn a lot of duties that he never thought he'd  
do.

But every chair they purchase will be laden with  
delight;  
Every trinket toiled and saved for will with joy be  
doubly bright.  
So I'm not the least bit sorry, but am positively  
glad,  
For they'll know the fun of striving which their  
dads and mothers had.

## *The Work of Summer*

Comes Summer to the world its work to do,  
To bring fruition to the tiny seed;  
To strew the earth with all that man may need;  
To give the apple cheek its crimson hue  
And the rich stores of golden grain renew;  
To toil with patience and with certain speed  
Without complaint o'er large or trivial deed.  
And run in service here its brief course through.

I sometimes think that Summer seems to know  
It shall not live to see its tasks complete.  
It lays its glories gained at Autumn's feet,  
And is content in having labored so,  
As some tired father when his time is done,  
Who leaves to those he loves the treasures won.

## *When the Baby Arrives*

When a little baby comes  
Little fingers, little thumbs,  
Little chubby feet and toes  
And the little button nose  
Give the mother more delight  
Than the stars which shine at night.

Others race to get a view  
Of that little baby new.  
Come the grandmas hastening there  
In the happiness to share,  
And among the wondering crowd  
Walk the grandpas, very proud.

Comes a most devoted aunt,  
Whom no other can supplant,  
To discover endless charms  
In those little dimpled arms  
And to bring, as aunties do,  
Little gifts of pink or blue.

So in manners quaint and strange  
Thus the lives of many change.  
With new hope the future gleams,  
New delights, new cares, new dreams,  
And with joy the old world hums,  
When a little baby comes.

## *Real People*

The backbone of the nation is the happy-hearted throng  
Of ordinary people who go swinging right along.  
They live in modest houses and they work from day to day  
And the papers never notice what they do or what they say,  
For they're always keeping busy at life's commonplace affairs,  
Planning futures for their children, and what golden dreams are theirs!

They are settled in their habits and their views of wrong and right.  
They are simple folk and friendly and they're often home at night.  
They keep little backyard gardens and the mothers stitch and sew,  
And the fathers all are saving for some joy they want to know.  
They deal with hurt and sorrow with a faith they've learned to hold,  
And they're patient with their children and they're mindful of the old.  
They are honest with their neighbors, and they're honest in their play;  
They are fond of mirth and music in a simple sort of way.

They believe in God and serve Him, and you'll  
notice as a rule  
They always send their children to a near-by Sunday  
school;  
And in spite of all the sneering of the scornful  
or the base,  
The simple, sturdy people are the backbone of the  
race.

## *Twenty-five Years*

Throughout the years that we've been wed,  
With all their stormy weather,  
And all their fits of doubt and dread,  
Somehow we've kept together.  
Somehow, my dear, in spite of care  
And hurts that came to smart us,  
And little wrongs which seemed unfair,  
We've never let them part us.

Oh, we've had days of storm and stress,  
And we've had griefs that tried us;  
But sorrow never made love less  
Or threatened to divide us.  
Somehow in spite of all I've done  
And said when irritated,  
We've managed to keep going on  
Like sweethearts, newly mated.

We've had our share of ups and downs  
And tasks to irk and fret us,  
Our foolishness brought frequent frowns,  
Our blunders grave upset us.  
But since the tie that binds oft snaps  
For others just as plucky,  
And we've escaped disaster, p'raps  
My dear, we've just been lucky.

## *Creed*

Lord, for the day 'tis these I ask:  
The courage needed for the task;  
The patience to abide delay,  
The willingness the friend to play.

Lord, grant to me what strength I'll need  
For every large or trivial deed;  
And let me, ere the sun descends,  
For all past failures make amends.

In some way when shall come the test,  
Lord, let me measure to my best;  
So let me live that others may  
Rejoice that I have passed their way.

Lord, this my hope and this my prayer,  
That in Thy purpose I may share  
And by Thy mercy and Thy grace  
Make this day more than commonplace.

## *Joseph of Arimathea*

Joseph of Arimathea had lived out his long career,  
Growing by counseling wisely, wealthier, year by  
year.

He was known as a righteous rich man, gentle and  
kind and true,

But history seldom lingers to tell us what such men  
do.

Joseph of Arimathea in the gloom of a Friday night  
Visited Pontius Pilate—the envoy of Roman might.  
“There was a man named Jesus nailed to a cross  
to-day,”

Said he, “and I ask permission to care for his  
lifeless clay.

“Little I know about him, but I’ve heard that his  
life was clean.

I am told that because of his teachings men hated  
this Nazarene.

Those who are called his apostles still fear what  
the mob may do,

So I ask your august permission to care for a  
fellow Jew.”

And Pilate who trusted Joseph and honored him,  
promptly said:

"I will give you a guard of soldiers. Go now and  
bury the dead."

Thus strangely is history fashioned. From one  
kindly deed there came  
To the rich man of Arimathea eternal glory and  
fame.

## *Supper's Ready*

Supper's ready! There's the call  
I delight in most of all!  
With the evening settling down,  
Everybody home from town,  
Tired and hungry, but content  
With the way the day was spent;  
Waiting patient as can be  
Mother's cry: "Come on to tea!"

Supper's ready! One and all  
Hurry gladly down the hall,  
And with smiles upon their faces  
At the table take their places.  
Here's a summons, girl and boy,  
Not to labor, but to joy;  
Not to do and dare and die,  
But to bread and meat and pie!

Supper's ready! Do you hear?  
Loved ones come and gather near,  
Put away your petty cares,  
To the table draw your chairs.  
Now the busy day is done,  
Let's be merry every one,  
And be grateful to the Lord  
For the food upon the board.

## *Making the Best of It*

Making the best of it! What do you mean:  
Doing with little and staying serene?  
When but a burden has luxury been?

Making the best of it! Do you regard  
Toil and its need as excessively hard?  
Since when has indolence paid a reward?

Making the best of it! Can it be said  
Children grow strong when on sweets they are fed?  
Since when has cake nourished better than bread?

Making the best of it! Twist it about,  
Difficult problems and dark days of doubt,  
Once more are bringing the best of us out.

## *The Lovely Smile*

The little lady old and gray  
Still had a lovely smile for all,  
And many a cheery word to say  
When people came to call.

And if you stopped beside her gate  
In summer, autumn or the spring,  
Your coat lapel she'd decorate  
With some gay bit of blossoming.

We thought of her as always gay  
And lovely as a sunny morn,  
Who smiled our bitterness away,  
And yet herself no care had borne.

She showed no scar of injuries old  
And never mentioned hurts she'd known.  
She listened to the woes we told;  
Deep hidden kept her own.

Yet out of sorrow's bitterest hours,  
And out of heartache and distress,  
The little lady raised her flowers  
And earned that smile of loveliness.

## *The Drawback*

I know a surgeon calm and wise,  
The hand of death he stays;  
He's marvelous where danger lies.  
But awful bridge he plays.

I know a warrior brave and bold  
Who fought at Vimy Ridge;  
His fame, in history shall be told,  
But he's a dub at bridge!

I know a man whose fortunes mount  
Beyond the dreams of bards,  
And yet at bridge he cannot count  
Exactly thirteen cards.

There is a lawyer, best of men,  
On whom a case to rest,  
Who cannot seem to learn just when  
A queen should be finessed.

And so I think in moments when  
Misplays my partners call,  
That many of our greatest men  
Can't play the game at all.

## *Playing Father*

I notice when they're playing house, Miss Janet  
wants to be  
The mother in the flowing gown to sit and serve  
the tea,  
And always there's an argument that endless seems  
to run,  
No child likes playing father, for it isn't any fun!

Now one will be the servant girl, and one will be  
the nurse,  
And very gravely day by day these roles will they  
rehearse;  
But when they come to settle which will play the  
father's part,  
As sure as I am telling tales a quarrel's bound to  
start.

It seems these little mimics, aping grown-ups ways  
and airs,  
Have learned that it is father who must carry in the  
chairs,  
It's father who must do the work and all the  
errands run,  
And if they make you be the man you can't have  
any fun.

I chuckle as I watch them, with Miss Janet pouring  
tea  
And giving orders to the child who's imitating me.  
I love this childish drama, but I'd tell 'em every  
one,  
That after all their father really has a lot of fun!

## *Paid in Advance*

He never had a problem, and he never had a care—  
He merely had to buy them when he needed shoes  
to wear.

He never had a mortgage, with the interest overdue,  
So the common woes of most of us he never really  
knew.

He never had to sacrifice to buy his wife a hat—  
The dad who lived before him had attended to all  
that.

He never had to worry, never had to scheme and  
plan,

To save a little money like the ordinary man.

Was the parlor carpet fading? He sent out and  
bought a new,

And never thought about it when the bill for it was  
due.

If the notion came upon him he could travel any-  
where,

Since his dear old dad before him had already paid  
his fare.

He never had a doctor's bill he couldn't promptly  
pay.

He never had a duty rise to interfere with play.

He never suffered failure; never knew despair or  
doubt  
Or the cares which common people have to think  
so much about,  
By his dear old dad before him every needful thing  
was done,  
But he'd merely robbed his youngster of a glorious  
lot of fun.

## *What's in It for Me?*

We fancied he'd share in our cause. Instead,  
"There is nothing in it for me!" he said.  
He passed up pity and play and mirth  
And counted his time to the penny's worth.  
Ask for his help, and this would be  
His answer: "What is there in it for me?"

Nothing it meant if you said: "In this  
Perhaps is friendship you'll some day miss.  
Here is a task that won't pay in gold,  
But will leave you prouder when you grow old.  
Though nothing for this will your purse collect,  
It will pay you richly in self-respect."

"What is there in it for me?" he said.  
We mentioned pride, but he shook his head.  
"The joy of giving," he flicked his hand—  
That he never could understand.  
And he found when life's last far bend was turned  
That money was all he had ever earned.

## *The First Tooth*

Customs change and nations fall,  
Fashions come and fashions go.  
Father Time may alter all  
Which of pride and pomp we know,  
But ten thousand years away,  
With their added gains of truth,  
Still will mothers hail the day  
When the baby gets a tooth!

Great events may come to pass;  
Marvels may be wrought by man.  
Powerful microscopic glass  
May discover nature's plan.  
What important now we deem  
May be scorned by wiser youth;  
Still a triumph it will seem  
When the baby gets a tooth!

Time may alter many things,  
Bettering our present good,  
But what change the future brings  
Will not vary motherhood.  
As it's now it still will be  
For another million years,  
Mother's eyes will dance with glee  
When the first white tooth appears.

## *Autumn*

The falling leaves seem pitiful to see,  
Cold, old, brown things that quit life's rugged  
stem.

They've clung so gladly to their mother tree  
And now the frozen earth is taking them.

I watch them fluttering 'neath a somber sky,  
Too frail to battle with the wind to-day  
And wonder if, like men, they fear to die  
And longer on the branch would care to stay.

I watched them come to bud in early spring  
And through the summer knew their friendly  
shade.

Among them I have heard the song birds sing.  
Ours was a friendship brief, but gladly made.

But now too old and tired to carry on,  
A last farewell they seem to wave at me,  
Drift past my window swiftly and are gone  
To find their purpose in eternity.

## *The Black Sheep*

Why they never understood  
They had labored for his good,  
Led him through his days of youth  
Always to the paths of truth,  
Yet when burned temptation's flame  
Often was he lured to shame.

Him they never understood,  
Naught was told them so they could.  
Strange they thought it he should be  
So unlike his ancestry.  
Back for years his kith and kin  
Had remained unshamed by sin.

Never were they reconciled  
To this wayward, careless child.  
Never could they understand  
Why he heeded no command;  
Why in matters, great or small,  
He was different from them all.

When he died the mourners near  
Couldn't see and couldn't hear,  
But below the dust was stirred  
And a friendly willow heard,  
One long dead to memory,  
Whispering: "He was just like me."

## *The Carver*

I sing of the old-fashioned carver who gracefully  
wielded his blade,  
Who sat in his place with a grin on his face and  
was deaf to the comment we made;  
He had learned every joint of a chicken, a turkey,  
a partridge, or goose,  
And he sat there or stood as a gentleman should as  
he cleverly whittled them loose.  
Oh, there was an artist worth watching, a master  
performer was he;  
But the age has grown smart, and that glorious art  
is a joy that no longer we see.

My grandfather taught to my father the knack of  
dissecting a hen,  
He made him recite where was dark meat and light  
again and again and again.  
He trained him to sharpen his knife on the steel, and  
to flourish his blade in the air,  
He shouted: "Alack! You do nothing but hack,  
when you ought to be slicing with care."  
'Twas a gentleman's boast as he sat at a roast that  
he skillfully handled his knife;  
And until a boy knew where the second joint grew  
he wasn't thought ready for life.

Now they whittle the meat in the kitchen, and bring  
it piled up on a plate;  
Be it roast beef or ham, or a turkey or lamb, it is  
passed in the ready-carved state.  
And nobody jests with the carver, and nobody  
praises his art;  
There are grown men to-day who unblushingly say  
they can't get a drum stick apart,  
But something has gone from the dinner, however  
expensive its cost,  
That we viewed with delight in the age taken flight,  
ere the fine art of carving was lost.

## *Love of Beauty*

The love of beauty once possessed  
Outlives the sordid dust and grime,  
And holds its dwelling in the breast  
Against the ravages of time.

And this is why a woman wan  
And grayed and beaten by defeat,  
From day to day will struggle on  
To keep an ugly dwelling neat.

Day after weary day will see  
Her battling with the dirt and dust,  
Fighting the filth of poverty  
Because her nobler nature must.

So fond of beauty humans are  
That often in a squalid room  
A woman fills with stones a jar  
And brings a lily bulb to bloom.

## *Fear*

The great god Fear grinned back at me:  
"I am the foe men never see,  
The hurt they never feel," said he.

"I am the wrong they never bear,  
The poison they themselves prepare.  
I am the shadow on the stair.

"I have no voice and yet I speak;  
No strength and yet I blanch the cheek  
And leave the strongest mortals weak.

"I am the blackguard man befriends,  
Heeds most, feeds, cherishes, attends  
And 'gainst all counsel wise defends.

"I fire no gun, I make no cry,  
No lodging place in fact have I,  
Yet I'm the countless deaths men die.

"Mine is a humor ghastly grim,  
The lamp of reason I can dim,  
Though I am nothing but a whim.

"I am man's cruellest, bitterest foe,  
Yet past his door I could not go,  
Had he the wit to tell me; 'No'."

## *Noisy Place*

It is difficult to read  
When for candy children plead,  
And I find it quite disturbing  
When with shouts there is no curbing  
They come bounding in the place  
At a mad and merry pace,  
Just as if the world and all  
Had been made for children small.

It is difficult to write  
When with innocent delight  
And a joy no frown can smother  
Lusty lungs are calling: "Mother!  
May we go in swimming now?"  
So I sit and mop my brow  
And I push the work away  
Till there comes a quiet day.

It is difficult to nap  
When the screen doors bang and slap  
And a most tumultuous riot  
Shatters every hope of quiet.  
For no youngster ever thinks  
Father needs those forty winks,  
Or respects the plea we make  
To be still for mother's sake.

But somehow it seems to me  
That more difficult 'twould be  
Could I sit and read whenever  
Came the fancy, knowing never  
Child o' mine would burst the door  
To disturb me as of yore.  
I should oft' be longing then  
To be bothered once again.

## *The Layman*

Leave it to the ministers, and soon the church will die;  
Leave it to the women folk; the young will pass it by;  
For the church is all that lifts us from the coarse and selfish mob,  
And the church that is to prosper needs the layman on the job.

Now, a layman has his business, and a layman has his joys;  
But he also has the training of his little girls and boys;  
And I wonder how he'd like it if there were no churches here  
And he had to raise his children in a godless atmosphere.

It's the church's special function to uphold the finer things,  
To teach the way of living from which all that's noble springs;  
But the minister can't do it single-handed and alone,  
For the laymen of the country are the church's corner-stone.

When you see a church that's empty, though its  
doors are open wide,  
It is not the church that's dying; it's the laymen  
who have died;  
For it's not by song or sermon that the church's  
work is done;  
It's the laymen of the country who for God must  
carry on.

## *Careless*

I could not be a fashion plate,  
However hard I'd try.  
It always seems to be my fate  
To wear a roving tie,  
And though my tailor does his best  
To keep me slick and trim,  
The dog hair clinging to my vest,  
Cannot be charged to him.

Some men upon disaster's brink,  
Remember their attire,  
And always seem to stop to think  
Before they're splashed with mire;  
But I, although I know it's wrong,  
So heedlessly to rush,  
Forget my clothes and plod along  
Right through the pool of slush.

And some men fold their coats with care,  
The women folks to please,  
Some keep their trousers in repair,  
Apparently with ease,  
But mine grow wrinkled in a day,  
And soon their lustre lose,  
By gathering the powdered clay  
From little Janet's shoes.

Well, let mine be the wrinkled coat  
Which marks the careless chap;  
I'll take the greater happiness  
Of Janet in my lap.  
I'd rather all the world should see  
My raiment's shabby state,  
And keep her love, than live to be  
Some tailor's fashion plate.

## *Cure for the Sulks*

Sometimes when I don't play  
The way she wants me to  
Then Florence May will say:  
"All right! I'm mad with you!"  
And then she'll sulk and pout  
An' next day she pretends,  
When I come walkin' out,  
That we're not bein' friends.

But when I get a dime  
For lollypops or gum,  
Or if it's cookie time  
An' Mary's given me some,  
An' I go out to play  
Just like I've done before,  
Then Florence May will say:  
"I'm not mad any more."

It's rather queer to me,  
But mother says it's how  
Things used to be when she  
Was young as I am now.  
Her playmate used to cry,  
"I'm mad at you," an' then  
Candy or cake or pie  
Would make them friends again.

## *Grace at Table*

When I was but a little lad, not more than eight  
or nine,

The mother had a table prayer she taught us line  
by line.

With all the family gathered round, heads bowed  
and hands in place

We'd sit in solemn silence until one of us said  
grace.

*"Be present at our table, Lord,"* her favorite grace  
began.

*"Be here and everywhere adored,"* the little couplet  
ran.

*"These creatures bless and grant that we—"* I hear  
it now as then—

*"May feast in Paradise with Thee!"* and all would  
say, *"Amen."*

Day in and out through weal and woe, high gain or  
common-place,

At every meal our heads we bowed throughout this  
simple grace.

*"Be present at our table, Lord!"* From all that has  
occurred

And all the joy that we have known—I'm sure He  
must have heard.

## *Parental Pride*

Just a little baby,  
    Cute as she can be,  
Lovely as the blossom  
    On the apple tree.  
Round the wide world over  
    Babies, like the flowers,  
Are beautiful to look at,  
    But none like this of ours!

There are blue-eyed babies  
    Smiling everywhere,  
Babes with dimpled elbows,  
    Cheeks as soft and fair,  
But there's none we'd change for.  
    Let the truth be known—  
There's no other baby  
    As pretty as our own.

Selfish, yes, and boastful,  
    Proud as folks can be;  
Out of all the babies,  
    Loveliest is she.  
Let the neighbors coldly  
    Our conceit discuss,  
But God's perfect baby  
    Has been sent to us.

## *Landlord and Tenant*

The landlord wouldn't paint the place  
Or keep it in repair,  
Yet at the window panes was lace,  
Though every board was bare,  
And those who passed it by could trace  
The tenant's tender care.

And those who passed it by could see  
A blossoming plant or two.  
Despite the tenant's poverty  
A little garden grew,  
Lovely and gay and orderly  
The blazing summer through.

The landlord Life at times seems cold  
And deaf to every plea,  
Yet to our dreams we still can hold,  
Courageous we can be  
And 'round the place plant marigold  
For passers-by to see.

We, too, with faith, can plant a rose  
Where all is bleak and bare  
And fashion pretty furbelows  
For windows of despair,  
And work, till our poor dwelling shows  
A tenant's tender care.

## *The Grumbling Soldier*

There was a grumbling soldier who growled the  
whole year long,

What wasn't was the "ought-to-be"; what was was  
always wrong.

He didn't like his station, and he made it plain to  
me

That anywhere he wasn't was the place he'd rather  
be.

He didn't like his general; he cursed his captain,  
too;

He saw no rhyme or reason in the chores they made  
him do.

He wished they would transfer him to some post  
across the sea,

For anywhere he wasn't was the place he'd like to  
be.

They sent him o'er the ocean with his rifle and his  
pack,

But no sooner had he landed than he wished that  
he were back.

He couldn't stand the tropics with the hot sun  
blazing down.

The place to be a soldier was some good old Yankee  
town.

At last death's final transfer moved him on to realms afar.

He drew a post in Heaven where the perfect quarters are.

But hardly was he seated when he passed around the word:

If St. Peter could arrange it he would like to be transferred.

## *The Martins*

The Martins are peculiar and whimsical at best,  
They're very charming tenants if with you they  
choose to nest,  
But though the house you build for them may per-  
fect seem to be  
You cannot coax them into it if something wrong  
they see.

I do not know precisely what the Martins ask from  
men;  
I only know they like a house with rooms for eight  
or ten,  
And it must stand above the ground full fourteen  
feet or more  
With unimpeded space about for them to wheel and  
soar.

The neighborhood must suit their choice; the gar-  
dens must be neat,  
Nor will they stay to raise their young along a  
noisy street,  
And many a man has built a house their fellowship  
to win  
Which for some cause, to him unknown, they would  
not enter in.

The scouts come on in early spring to look the  
houses o'er,

And if they do not like the place you'll see their  
charms no more,  
But should the home their fancies suit, within a  
day or two  
The Martins will arrive to spend the summertime  
with you.

## *Bi-Focal Trouble*

The wise optician smiled and said:  
"The upper half to look ahead,  
The lower half whereby to read,  
And thus one pair is all you need.  
Have patience. In a week or two  
Bi-focals will not trouble you."

I muttered as I left the shop:  
"For distance always use the top;  
The bottom lenses you will need  
When you sit down to write or read."  
I raised my right foot high in air  
To mount a step which wasn't there.

The level street became a hill;  
I looked at people standing still,  
And, since I used the lower glass,  
There seemed no room for me to pass;  
I turned a corner of the street  
And knocked a woman from her feet.

And all that day throughout the town  
My eyes kept looking up and down.  
"That fellow's drunk," I heard men say  
As I went reeling down the way.  
With those bi-focals on my face  
The town became a crazy place.

Bi-focal troubles curious are:  
The far seems near, the near seems far.  
You step for heights that don't exist  
And jostle folks you should have missed;  
Until man grows bi-focal wise  
He finds he can't believe his eyes.

## *Incident*

There was a lonely woman in a cottage. Day by  
day

Alone she walked her garden round to pass the time  
away.

Alone she brewed her cup of tea. At nine o'clock  
at night

Alone she walked from room to room to lock the  
windows tight.

She heard the neighbors laughing, but she never  
turned to see,

Nor raised her head nor took a step to share their  
revelry.

Her hair was thin and silvered and her face was  
lined with care.

And only little children ever found a welcome there.

For them she fashioned cookies to resemble polar  
bears

And sugar dates and walnut cakes and other sweet  
affairs,

And every little boy or girl who passed her  
threshold o'er

Could eat her stock of goodies till they couldn't  
swallow more.

She paid no heed to grown-ups, and the neighbors  
wondered why.

Alone she chose to keep her house; alone she chose  
to die.

The men folk thought her crazy, and the women  
often stood

And wondered who had wronged her, but the chil-  
dren thought her good.

We never learned her story. All alone one night  
she died

And when the children missed her, men were called  
to break inside.

They found her lying on the floor, her voice forever  
stilled,

And in the room the cookie jar, which she had just  
re-filled.

## *About Children*

Little children ought to be  
Seen and seldom heard.  
If at dinner time or tea  
Such a thing occurred,  
I should promptly make a plea  
For a merry word.

If they waited until they  
First were spoken to,  
As the grown-ups often say  
Little ones should do,  
I should ask them right away,  
"Children, how are you?"

I don't want them sitting there  
Solemn as can be,  
Each one rigid in his chair;  
If I want to see  
Images and statues rare  
Art museums are free.

Little children should be seen  
And not heard by day!  
Who could by a thought so mean  
Lead the world astray?  
What a grouch he must have been  
Such a thing to say!

## *Beauty*

The busy world has time and space  
For posy and bits of lace,

For paintings, star dust, silver streams,  
And things as fanciful as dreams.

Not all in nature men behold  
Is sternly practical and cold,

For countless lovely things she weaves  
For which no purpose man perceives.

At times she seems to draw apart  
Merely to make a work of art,

Or brighten with her labors rare  
Places which otherwise were bare.

So in the busy life of man  
Which reason wholly seems to plan,

The self-same impulse bids him take  
The time to work for beauty's sake,

And count as his supreme success,  
Trifles of dainty loveliness.

## *Those Duty Calls*

When bill collectors call on me  
I know that duty sends them.  
They do not come my books to see  
Though I'm a man who lends them.  
Nor do they come to chat a while  
Or ask me how I'm feeling;  
Their visit, howsoe'er they smile,  
Is just a business dealing.

A plumber makes a duty call  
When pipes of ours are leaking.  
He may not like the house at all,  
Our friendship he's not seeking.  
He comes because he's sent to see  
What's wrong and to correct it,  
And leaves without good-bye to me;  
What's more, I don't expect it.

But friendship sometimes takes a way  
Which sadly mars its beauty,  
How often man is heard to say:  
"Because it is my duty  
I'm going to call on Jim or Joe  
And say a word to cheer him;  
I really think I ought to go  
Because I'm living near him."

These social duty calls I hate  
With bitter detestation.  
I want no one to swing my gate  
To quit an obligation.  
Alone I'd rather twirl my thumbs  
Than give a moment's thought to  
The proudest visitor who comes  
Because he feels he ought to

## *Linen and Lace*

A linen man from Syria has pretty wares to sell,  
Embroidered things and lacy things which women  
love so well.

He brings them in a mighty grip held fast with  
leather stout,  
And any wife will have to buy if once he gets them  
out.

A banquet cloth from Italy he spreads across his  
knee;

“Oh, madam, here’s a bargain that’s as cheap as  
cheap can be!

And here is lace from Normandy that’s truly very  
fine;

While here I have a damask cloth of marvelous de-  
sign!”

To me, they’re merely table spreads and napkins he  
displays.

I cannot see why women sit so long at them to gaze;  
But, oh, the wily linen man has speech at his com-  
mand,

Concerning lovely luncheon sets which ladies un-  
derstand.

I have expensive habits of my own, I must confess;  
I've often looked at costly books and hungered to  
possess.

I've bought them when I shouldn't, so I understand  
her case.

Her weakness is for pretty things of linen and of  
lace.

## *Patience*

The patient man who stands to care  
And shrugs his shoulders now and then  
At little hurts he has to bear  
Outdistances the fretful men.

The patient man who bit by bit  
Some trying, tedious task completes,  
Conquers where fretful men admit  
The pain required their skill defeats.

The price of many goals is Time,  
Plus willingness to work and wait.  
Though courage oft is called sublime,  
One must have patience to be great.

Steadfast of purpose he must be,  
Who would some worth while goal attain;  
When fretful men disheartened flee,  
The man of patience dares again.

## *Wisdom*

This is wisdom, maids and men:  
Knowing what to say and when.

Speech is common; thought is rare;  
Wise men choose their words with care.

Artists with the master touch  
Never use one phrase too much.

Jesus, preaching on the Mount,  
Made His every sentence count.

Lincoln's Gettysburg address  
Needs not one word more nor less.

This is wisdom, maids and men:  
Knowing what to say and when.

## *Sleeping Child*

I like to tiptoe round her when she's lying fast  
asleep  
And straighten out the covers where she's kicked  
them in a heap,  
And when I find her sprawling kitty-corner on the  
bed  
I find it fun to set aright that lovely sleepy-head.

Oh, whether late or early I'm retiring for the night,  
I slip into her bedroom just to see that she's all  
right;  
I stand and gaze upon her and I chuckle when I see  
Her feet are on the pillow where her little head  
should be.

She's grown so very lively that she can't stay still  
at all.

The moment that she drops asleep she starts right  
in to crawl  
And sometimes, like a wooly dog, as comfy as you  
please,  
I've found her lost in dreamland with her head be-  
tween her knees.

Oh, I have tasks that weary me, and tasks that I  
detest.

The mother's always calling me to work when I  
would rest,  
But straightening out a little girl who's sleeping  
wrong-end to,  
I'd call the happiest task on earth a father has to do.

## *Achievement*

Let him who will go running for the lights that  
gleam afar,  
Where the music's tuned to dancing and the crowds  
of people are;  
Give me the restful evenings with the family gath-  
ered round  
And the few friends, tried and faithful, and that  
little patch of ground,  
With its lawn and beds of posies, which reflect the  
care I give,  
And I'll build a thousand memories to cherish while  
I live.

When I long for entertainment just to pass the time  
away,  
I've no lack of mirth and frolic—with the children  
I can play.  
Or in need of some diversion, as a happy group  
we'll go  
Hand in hand to sit together at a neighboring pic-  
ture show.  
But we'll keep our wants in reason and we'll keep  
our pleasures sweet  
And try to find the gladness that adorns our little  
street.

Oh, the book of life is written not in scarlet inks or  
gold

Or in deeds of dash and color. As a simple tale it's told.

When you reach the final chapter and you glimpse the pages through

All that memory has recorded as the worth while side of you

Are the joys and passing sorrows which the family has shared,

With the failures and achievements and the few good friends who cared.

'Tis the little house and garden where the life-time labors count.

Not in dollars but in friendships will our satisfactions mount.

Has the home-place been a haven where the children joyed to be?

Do they turn and look upon it with a happy memory?

If, in spite of hurt and sorrow, the old walls have known content,

You have filled your life with glory and your days have been well-spent.

## *Evening Smoke*

I saw the blue smoke rising from a little chimney  
stack,

And I knew somewhere across the fields a man was  
coming back.

The train that bore me westward kept rushing on  
its way,

But I fancied I could see him as he closed another  
day.

Fresh smoke it was, I'm certain, for when a fire is  
old

The wisps that leave the chimney seem thin and  
worn and cold.

But blue smoke, hale and hearty, informs the weary  
man

That mother's in the kitchen and supper's in the pan.

Somewhere beyond the woodland I know he trudged  
along,

A scythe upon his shoulder and on his lips a song;  
His day of labor ended, and like as not, thought I,  
He's thinking now of steaming stew, topped off with  
apple pie.

What curious thoughts and fancies beset the home-  
sick man

Who through a Pullman window the landscape turns  
to scan.  
The smoke at evening tells him a husband's coming  
home  
And supper's waiting for him—but he must west-  
ward roam.

## *The Business of an Uncle*

It's the business of an uncle, which I've frequently expressed,  
To buy the toys and candies which the youngsters like the best,  
And although the dads and mothers must at times some joys refuse,  
An uncle's proper function is to give 'em what they choose.

It may be a mother's duty now and then to mutter, "No";  
And a wise and proper father should not every sweet bestow,  
But with nephews and with nieces every uncle worth his salt  
Should disdain all such restrictions and be generous to a fault.

Now I know the uncle business, in these very prosperous times.  
He should always, on his visits, take a pocketful of dimes,  
And of course if there is something which the parents have denied,  
It's an uncle's job to buy it just to keep them satisfied.

It's the duty of the parents to be strict and very stern,  
And to teach those little rascals all the lessons they must learn,  
But an uncle's job is different. He's another sort of man,  
And the business of an uncle is to spoil 'em if he can.

## *Garden Experience*

It was difficult to work with; it was stubborn yellow clay,

So we dug it from the garden and threw it all away,  
And we bought a load of top soil, very rich and very black,

Which with scarcely any effort, would with blossoms pay us back.

Yellow clay is dull to work with and it bakes beneath the sun

And the man who has to fight it knows his work seems never done.

So we threw it in the alley, for impatient folks are we,

And we wanted flowers in summer without such a costly fee.

But our roses failed to flourish and we saw them pine and die,

And we called upon a gardener who knew to tell us why.

He looked the bushes over in his wise and kindly way

And said: "If you want roses what you need is yellow clay."

In our ignorance we'd fancied only richer soils were  
good.

That the heavy clay held virtue we had never un-  
derstood.

It had seemed so dull and stubborn that we found  
to our dismay

We had had the stuff for roses, but had thrown it  
all away.

## *The Human Alarm Clock*

Oh, there are clocks of various kinds  
Designed for rousing sleepy minds;  
And set for any hour you choose  
They're advertised to end your snooze  
But when it comes to downright charm  
Give me that three-year old alarm!

Give me that lovely tousled head  
That comes at dawn unto my bed,  
And with a most astounding leap  
Breaks in to end my sweetest sleep,  
And shouts this glad news in my ear:  
"Wake up! Another day is here!"

I have no love for bells that ring  
When I, in peace, am slumbering,  
And I confess that I despise  
The tinkling clock which bids me rise,  
But when that child comes tumbling in  
I start the morning with a grin.

No clock more accurately knows  
When day begins and nighttime goes  
Than does that lovely child of three  
Who runs to romp in bed with me;  
Precisely on the stroke of six  
A finger in my ear she sticks.

The day may come when I shall keep  
My bed in sweet unbroken sleep,  
And in those sad and lonely times  
Though I am roused by silver chimes  
I'll still recall the roguish charm  
Of her, our three-year old alarm!

## *The Tinsmith Goes Above*

“What did you do?” asked the Lord, and the traveling tinsmith said:

“I used to mend old pots and pans to earn my daily bread.

And you can’t get rich at that, for it’s little the poor can pay

For closing a gap in a kettle’s side, and the rich just send you away.

“Lord, I hadn’t much chance on earth, for I traveled the humble streets

Where none but the needy and common folks a traveling tinsmith meets.

Perhaps I am all to blame, but I haven’t the right to ask

A place up here with the great and wise for doing so small a task.”

And the good Lord smiled and said: “I have so devised my plans

That a place in Heaven may at last be won by a mender of pots and pans.

And all that I care to know and all that I’d have you tell

Is, when you were given a kettle to mend, are you sure that you did it well?”

## *Tuffy*

All the house is sad to-day,  
Tuffy has been laid away!  
Tuffy, blithe of heart and brave,  
Slumbers in a little grave.  
Oh, the bitter tears we've shed  
Over happy Tuffy, dead!

Just a dog! Well, maybe so,  
To the folks who come and go,  
But to Janet and to me,  
He was friendly company;  
Honest, faithful, tender, too!  
More so than some men he knew.

Tuffy had the sort of mind  
Unto friendliness inclined.  
Watched for Janet day by day  
Coming home from school to play;  
Knew the time and o'er and o'er  
Stood to greet her at the door.

Say it's foolish, if you will,  
But we're grieving for him still.  
Say that dogs should dwell apart  
And not crawl into your heart  
So their deaths can sadden you,  
But the trouble is they do.

## *Circus Memories*

Oh, never comes the circus with its wonders into town

But I recall a little boy who longed to be a clown,  
And high above the heads of all an acrobat I see  
That little lad of long ago was hopeful he would be.

No care had he for words that rhyme. A more entrancing thing

Was jumping on and off a horse within a sawdust ring.

And all the verses ever penned he'd gladly trade back then

To be the spangled hero in the roaring lions' den.

There was a riding lady in a fluffy skirt of pink  
Who might have lured this little boy away from  
printer's ink,

But destiny or fortune or the fates (or was it dad?)  
Contrived to change the life-work of this circus  
dreaming lad.

He would not now retrace his steps. Through eyes  
now growing dim

He sees an acrobat's career would not have done for  
him.

But still when bands are playing and the circus barkers shout

A little boy of fifty-one walks wide-eyed round  
about.

## *Marriages*

The man had little at all to say,  
The woman was pretty and smart and gay,  
And everyone wondered what she could see  
To love in so solemn a man as he,  
And everyone wondered what charm he'd shown  
The love of a woman so fair to own.

Oh, you waste your time when you sit outside  
And try to discover why knots are tied;  
Why Jean weds Joe and why Frank loves May.  
Fate ties them up in its own good way,  
And the fact remains when the wondering's done  
By the strangest men are some women won.

Ugly and fair and dull and bright  
These are the twain which oft unite,  
But this you'll learn if you watch them smile;  
Love isn't founded on looks or style,  
And the man or the woman you can't abide  
Is always somebody's joy and pride.

## *Father's Problem*

What do you do when a young fellow comes  
And sits in the parlor and twiddles his thumbs,  
Or settles himself in your favorite chair  
And acts just as though he'd a right to be there?  
When you know very well why he's hanging about,  
Do you call a policeman and have him thrown out?

When you come home at five for a pre-dinner nap  
And you find on the sofa that dreamy-eyed chap,  
And four times a week, though expenses you'd trim,  
The maid sets a place at the table for him,  
Where he ogles your daughter the whole meal-time  
through—  
Tell me, you fathers, what is there to do?

When mother keeps saying the young man's all  
right,  
But you're certain yourself that he's not very bright,  
And you don't like his necktie, his collar or shoes,  
Is it wise to start warfare you're certain to lose?  
When he borrows your car and your gasoline, too,  
Is there something to stop this a father can do?

I know what's on foot and I seem to recall  
A father to whom I gave no thought at all.  
I was after his daughter, and would he or no,  
When I entered I thought he should get up and go.  
So I fancy when young men are prompted to woo  
There is not very much that a father can do.

## *Radio*

A thing of tubes and wires, and lo,  
The miracle of radio !  
The simple dial turning round  
Searches the atmosphere for sound  
And captures from the silent air  
Song, music, eloquence and prayer.

How strange this mystery of things  
Which to mankind such pleasure brings  
And day and night with cheer illumines  
The dreariest and loneliest rooms !  
I never turn the dials round  
But what I feel a thrill profound.

Fed by the magic microphones  
The air takes up its freight of tones  
And carries safely every word  
Till nation-wide the voice is heard.  
A singer in New York appears  
And distant California hears.

Oh, happier world, where all may know  
The miracle of radio !  
These things of tubes and wires now grace  
The mansion and the cottage place  
And rich and poor alike may share  
The golden harvest of the air.

## *Autumn Scene*

Upon the hills the giant trees with color were ablaze,  
Like smoke from smouldering embers rose the late  
October haze.

All silent and magnificent I fancied I could see  
The Master Artist touching up some solitary tree,  
But the glory of the landscape was a flash of crim-  
son flame

At the bottom of the picture where the painter signs  
his name.

Now I cannot speak the language of the men who  
paint and draw,

And with technical precision can't describe the scene  
I saw.

All I know is that a picture was unrolled for me to  
see,

And the high lights and the shadows seemed just  
what they ought to be,

But that gorgeous burst of color in the foreground  
caught my eye,

And I knew it made the landscape, though I couldn't  
say just why.

It struck me as peculiar, where an earthly painter  
signs,

The Master Artist splashed His name in tangled  
shrubs and vines.

And as I stepped up closer I discovered and was  
glad  
He had given that touch of splendor to the poorest  
stuff He had.  
To the common things in summer which man scarce-  
ly sees at all  
He had given the place of honor and the glory of  
the fall.

## *Those First Long Trousers*

We went together, just as though  
Together we must share the blow;  
Though she alone had gone before,  
We went together to the store  
And watched him proudly try them on,  
And then our little boy was gone.  
Our little knickerbockered lad  
Came out a youth, in trousers clad!

The smiling clerk said: "Fine!" but, oh,  
Our stab of pain he couldn't know.  
Perhaps he truly thought it strange  
That mother didn't like the change  
And felt that something in her died  
The minute that he stepped inside  
That little dressing room alone,  
But well I understood that moan.

She knew that never more he'd be  
The little boy upon her knee,  
The laughing, loving, roguish child  
Whose kisses on her cheek were piled.  
She knew what change was taking place  
Within that narrow dressing space.  
Her child went in beyond a doubt,  
But soon a man was coming out.

The clerk said: "Fine!" but well I knew  
The mother held a different view.  
The little lad she'd loved was gone,  
There stood a youth with trousers on;  
A youth with shoulders broad and square,  
A youth who had a jaunty air,  
And when we left that clothing store  
We had a little boy no more.

## *Happiness*

He builded his happiness out of these:  
Birds and blossoms and friendly trees,  
Books that stood on a little shelf,  
Three or four neighbors, much like himself,  
The wife and children who bore his name  
And he asked no favors from wealth or fame.

He found delight in his garden plot,  
Knew marigold and forget-me-not;  
He walked the hills, and he fished the streams,  
With friends he trusted he shared his dreams.  
He was sometimes merry and sometimes sad,  
But he made the most of what joys he had.

He found his thrills in the lesser things,  
The joy a blossoming peony brings;  
The merry songs and the kindly mirth  
Of the gentle women and men of earth.  
He thanked his God for the right to live,  
And he never asked more than life could give.

Seekers for happiness wander far,  
And, oh, how jaded and tired they are,  
Forever pursuing the strange new thrill  
They never have caught and never will!  
But he found friendship and flowers and trees,  
And builded his happiness out of these.

## *The Proud Pheasant*

Sometimes a pheasant comes to call  
And brings his plain-garbed hens to see  
My lattice fence where roses sprawl  
And my two clumps of shrubbery.

He struts about my garden plot  
Arrayed in all his plumage gay  
And notices, as like as not,  
The bare spots where the youngsters play.

I watch this proud and gorgeous bird  
Followed by females drab and plain,  
And wonder if they think absurd  
A husband who can be so vain.

Do they such splendid garb admire  
And think him marvelous to see,  
Or do they of his boasting tire  
As our wives tire of you and me?

## *Little Lady Riches*

Little Lady Riches, with her groom came riding by,  
All dressed up in jodhpurs and a scarf pin in her  
tie;

She cantered and she galloped up and down the  
bridle way,

And passed a group of children in the city park at  
play.

She saw them at a sand pile, and she saw them on a  
swing,

Without a groom to guard them as they jumped  
from ring to ring.

Little Lady Riches had a horse to ride about.

But grooms are sullen company, they seldom laugh  
or shout.

And every time she passed them in the city park at  
play

She gazed upon the children till she'd ridden far  
away.

And men, like me, who watched her from the bench-  
es where we sat,

Were certain that she wanted just one day as blithe  
as that.

The groom was under orders, so he galloped her  
along,

Pretending that her fancy for such pleasures must  
be wrong.

Of course, the man knew better, but a groom to  
earn his pay

Must always do precisely as his wealthy patrons say.  
And Little Lady Riches had to canter mile on mile,  
When it was plain she wanted to make mud pies  
for awhile.

She thought it must be lovely to be free to romp and  
play

And to have no groom to guard her every minute  
of the day.

She was wearing pretty jodhpurs, but beneath her  
riding dress

Was the self-same urge to frolic which all little ones  
possess.

As she gazed upon those children we could almost  
hear her sigh—

But the groom was under orders and he made her  
gallop by.

## *Hello, Tulips*

Hello, tulips, don't you know  
Stocks to-day are very low?  
You appear so bright and glad,  
Don't you know that trade is bad?  
You are just as fair to see  
As you were in times when we  
Rolled in money. Tell me how  
You can look so happy now?

Hello, tulips, white and red,  
Gleaming in the garden bed,  
Can it be you haven't heard  
All the grief which has occurred?  
Don't you see the saddened eye  
Of the human passer-by?  
By his frowning, can't you tell  
Things have not been going well?

Hello, tulips, in the sun  
You are lovely, every one.  
But I wonder why don't you  
Wear a sad expression, too?  
Can it be you fail to see  
Things aren't what they used to be?  
This old world is all upset,  
Why don't you begin to fret?

And they answered me: "Hello.  
Nothing's altered that we know,  
Warm the sun, and sweet the rain,  
Summer skies are blue again,  
Birds are singing and we nod  
Grateful tulip prayers to God.  
Only mortals fret and strive.  
We are glad to be alive.

## *Indebted*

The interest on the mortgage on the house is over-due.

The grocer's writing letters threatening us that he will sue.

The plumber wants his money for a washer for a tap.

The Damsel Shoppe is dunning us for sister's evening wrap,

But the thing that worries mother till her face is wreathed in frowns,

Is the fact that we're indebted for a dinner to the Browns.

We haven't paid the doctor since the market went to smash.

The man who runs the laundry writes to say he needs some cash.

I owe the tailor something and I hate to catch his eye;

I always look the other way until he's traveled by;  
But the thing that worries mother isn't money that she lacks,

But the fact that we're indebted for a dinner to the Blacks.

It is not for me to quarrel with the women and their ways;

They've a certain code of honor and from it no one  
strays.

Men may think their worries greater, but the social  
laws are stern,

And the dinner you've accepted is the meal you must  
return.

So I sympathize with mother as she lies awake o'  
nights,

Since for weeks we've been indebted for a dinner  
to the Whites.

## *The Little Country Drug Store*

Liniments for horses,  
Medicines for cows;  
Oils to rub on women folk  
To soothe their aching brows.  
Little country drug store,  
Not like those in town,  
Where is heard the rustle  
Of many a silken gown.

Remedies in bottles  
For bruises, hurts and sprains,  
Panaceas commended  
For human aches and pains.  
Tonics for the poultry  
When hens refuse to lay  
Put out where city druggists  
Have perfumes on display.

Cures for every ailment  
To which the flesh is heir;  
For mothers in the country  
Have little time to spare.  
And so the village drug store  
A hundred needs supplies,  
Including soothing syrups  
Whene'er the baby cries.

The city drug store glistens  
With countless pretty things,  
And all the trifling trinkets  
Which love of beauty brings,  
But still the country drug store  
By every inch of space  
Proclaims the cares and problems  
The wives of farmers face.

## *What Makes the Game*

“I fumbled,” said the sad-eyed lad,  
“And lost the golden chance I had!”  
“That’s quite all right,” his coach replied,  
“I understand how hard you tried.  
Forget it now! Go back and fight  
With all your strength and all your might.

“Take hold of this consoling thought:  
If every ball that’s thrown were caught;  
If no one faltered; no one fell;  
If every play we tried went well;  
If gain with every venture came,  
There would be nothing to the game.

“What makes the game? Not perfect play,  
But golden chances thrown away!  
The fumbled ball; the slight mistake  
Which men however skillful make,  
The faulty judgment and the will  
To wait and work for victory still.

“And so with life! If all were plain:  
If men perfection could attain,  
If neither doubt nor loss nor fear  
Should ever test our courage here;  
If we knew all, and all could see,  
Then deadly dull this life would be.”

## *The Everlasting Flowers*

The everlasting flower is grown  
In many a garden. Springtime sown  
It blossoms in the early fall  
And has no fear of death at all.

Its pink and yellow petals feel  
Like highly lacquered flakes of steel  
Which, if you run your finger round,  
Produce a strange metallic sound.

These everlasting flowers defy  
The death that other blossoms die.  
Stuck in an urn the winter through  
They hold their shape and color, too.

They gather dust like statues old  
And rattle when the wind blows cold,  
Till tired of seeing them about  
At last the housewife throws them out.

True charms are delicately made.  
The loveliest blossoms soonest fade;  
We pass blooms everlasting by  
To cherish those we know must die.

## *Trophies*

There's a moose head in the hall,  
And a dead fish on the wall,  
And a stuffed owl on the mantelpiece,  
And birds in a shining case.  
There's an antlered deer upstairs,  
And a mounted fox which shares  
With a partridge prone at its wily feet  
A nice mahogany base.

There's a maid each morn who must  
Go round the rooms to dust,  
And day by day on her weary face  
There is ever a dismal scowl,  
And this is the song she sings:  
"Dead deers are dreadful things!  
And I hate fish on a shining board  
And the wings of a mounted owl!"

"Oh, if ever a man I wed,  
May he care for books instead  
Of moose and mountain goats and deer  
And ducks in a glassy dome;  
May his hobby be postage stamps  
Instead of the Northern camps,  
For I've had my fill of dusting things  
Which a hunting man brings home."

## *The Friend*

It matters not to me how rich or poor he be,  
Or where he kneels to worship, or the task he  
does each day,  
Or be he black or white, if he will set me right,  
And tell me just which road to turn when I have  
lost my way.

When wandering alone, o'er paths to me unknown,  
Bewildered at the crossroads, I have little left of  
pride;  
The humblest man can be most welcome company.  
No sneers have I for him who comes to play the  
friendly guide.

The roads of life are strange, I know not where they  
range;  
Perplexed am I and fearful oft that I have gone  
astray,  
And friend is he, indeed, in spite of place or creed  
Who finds me lost and far from home and shows  
to me the way.

## *Gift from Heaven*

(A husband is a gift from Heaven to woman, says a prominent sociologist.—*News item.*)

Does your gift from Heaven give you all the money  
that you need?

Does he bring men home for dinner when but two  
you'd planned to feed?

Does your gift from Heaven always do exactly as  
he should?

Does he hang up his pajamas or just leave them  
where he stood?

As a husband have you thought him in his manners  
rather slack?

Well, he's now your gift from Heaven! Would you  
like to send him back?

Does your gift from Heaven, lady, stay out rather  
late at night?

Does he grumble in the morning if the coffee isn't  
right?

Does he whistle while he's shaving? Does he toss  
his things about?

When you make a bid at contract does he always  
take you out?

Does he frequently annoy you by the silly things  
he'll do?

Then remember, little lady, he was Heaven's gift  
to you.

A scientist has told us that he thoroughly believes  
A husband is a present which from Heaven the  
    wife receives,  
And I know the men will hail him as a friend, but  
    I shall fear  
To quote my Heavenly rating for I know she'll say,  
    "My dear,  
You may be a gift from somewhere, but you can't  
    be Heaven sent,  
The professor's made an error—'twas the other  
    place he meant."

## *Rabbits*

Janet has a pair of rabbits just as white as winter's  
snow

Which she begged of me to purchase just a week  
or two ago,

She found the man who raised them and she took  
me over there

To show me all his bunnies, at a dollar for a pair,  
And she pleaded to possess them, so I looked at her  
and said:

“Will you promise every morning to make sure that  
they are fed?”

She promised she would love them and she prom-  
ised she would see

They had lettuce leaves to nibble and were cared  
for tenderly.

And she looked at me astounded when I said: “I  
should regret

Buying pretty bunnies for you if to feed them you'd  
forget.

Once there was a little fellow, just about as old as  
you,

Who forgot to feed the rabbits which he'd owned  
a week or two.”

“He forgot to feed his rabbits!” said my Janet in  
dismay.

“Yes,” I said, “as I remember, he'd go scampering  
off to play.

And his mother or his daddy later on would go to  
see  
If his pretty little bunnies had been cared for prop-  
erly,  
And they'd shake their heads in sorrow and remark  
it seems too bad,  
That rabbits should belong to such a thoughtless  
little lad."

"Who was the boy?" she asked me, and the truth  
to her I told,  
"A little boy you've never seen who now is gray  
and old,  
Some folks say you're just like him," but she  
looked at me and said:  
"I won't forget my bunnies! I'll make sure that  
they are fed!"  
And she bravely kept her promise for about a week  
or two,  
But to-day I fed the rabbits, as I knew I'd have to  
do.

## *Apple Tree*

Of all the trees, it seems to me,  
The friendliest is the apple tree.

Its laden boughs in early fall  
Offer its treasures to us all.

Beside the road it seems to wait  
Much like an old man at his gate.

Who nods and smiles as men appear  
And always has a word of cheer.

Reach up and take the red fruit there,  
It acts as though it doesn't care.

If praise men speak, it seems to be  
Delighted with their company.

If small boys come, with stone and stick  
To storm the branches, fruited thick,

I'll swear its ways as gracious are  
As grandma's at her cookie jar,

And that an apple tree enjoys  
Such visits from the girls and boys.

Some trees there are which seem to frown  
And live aloof with their renown,

But apple trees appear to me  
The friendliest of all to be.

## *A Father's Job*

I may not be as clever as my neighbor down the street;  
I may never be as wealthy as some other men I meet;  
I may never have the glory that some other men have had;  
But I've got to be successful as this little fellow's Dad.

There are certain dreams I cherish that I'd like to see come true,  
There are things I would accomplish ere my working time is through;  
But the task my heart is set on is to guide a little lad,  
And to make myself successful as this little fellow's Dad.

I may never come to glory; I may never gather gold;  
Men may count me as a failure when my business life is told.  
But if he who follows after shall be manly, I'll be glad,  
For I'll know I've been successful as this little fellow's Dad.

It's the one job that I dream of ; it's the task I think  
of most ;  
If I'd fail that growing youngster, I'd have nothing  
else to boast ;  
For though wealth and fame I'd gather, all my fu-  
ture would be sad,  
If I failed to be successful as this little fellow's  
Dad.

## *The Old and the New Way*

Time was when a maiden had promised to wed  
And the question was settled, she blushingly said:  
"Before we can say when the wedding will be,  
Remember, my darling, there's father to see!"  
And so the next evening a stammering lad  
Went in to encounter a frozen-faced dad.

The father pretended he knew not at all  
Why the nervous young fellow had dropped in to  
call.

He sat there and eyed him from head down to toe,  
And waited the speech which somehow wouldn't  
flow.

He took off his glasses and grunted this: "Well!  
Young man, have you come here with something to  
sell?"

They had painted the father as someone to fear.  
With tales of his temper they'd poisoned his ear.  
Both mother and daughter had hinted of him  
That he was an ogre, ferocious and grim,  
Till it took all the courage a young fellow had  
To walk in and get the consent of her dad.

To-day things are different. Each love-making lad  
Who enters the house scares the life out of dad.

He knows if he raises his voice to demur  
An elopement is something that's apt to occur,  
And he knows against marriage 'tis vain to protest,  
So he bows in submission and hopes for the best.

## *Warning to Children*

Little children, don't you know  
In the street you mustn't go  
Rushing after hoop or ball?  
If you hear your playmates call,  
Look you south and look you north  
Ere you dare to venture forth;  
Every street is now a place  
Where the careless grown-ups race.

Little children say this o'er:  
"We must stop and look before  
We attempt to cross the street  
Lest disaster we shall meet.  
It's our duty to prevent  
Tragedy and accident.  
Vigilance we mustn't drop.  
Grown-ups haven't time to stop."

Grown-ups in their motor cars  
Smoking pipes and big cigars,  
Lighting cigarettes, cannot  
Think about some tiny tot  
Who may dash into the street  
Carelessly on flying feet.  
They've no time for taking care  
So the children must beware!

Children once again repeat:  
"There is danger in the street.  
Watch the corners! Grown-ups wise  
Swing round them and shut their eyes.  
Safety people wise discuss  
But they leave it all to us.  
Watch the streets and stay alive,  
That is where the grown-ups drive!"

## *Weariness*

God set him in a garden fair  
Where tulips bloomed each spring;  
About him always everywhere  
Was many a lovely thing,  
With miracle and mystery  
His every day was filled,  
And yet he only seemed to see  
The structures mortals build.

He knew the stars were overhead,  
But seldom raised his eyes,  
The paths of life he chose to tread,  
A stranger to the skies.  
From youth to manhood, then to age,  
He plunged his spirit deep  
In figures on the ledger page,  
Correct accountants keep.

He never learned the names of flowers,  
Or birds or friendly trees,  
In all his busy wakeful hours  
He never heard the breeze  
Enticing him with bits of song  
To let a day go by  
To watch a brooklet race along  
Or gaze upon the sky.

God set him in a garden fair  
With countless splendors strewn,  
But all he saw while walking there  
Was stone some man had hewn,  
And all he talked was loss and gain  
And cold commercial strife—  
Which makes it easy to explain  
How tired he grew of life.

## *Prisoner at the Bar*

And the judge said: "What! no money to pay  
In your hour of need  
A lawyer to plead  
Your case to-day?  
And you come to the bar  
Just as you are,  
Poor and alone, with no friend to nudge  
The solemn sides of the powerful judge  
And ask as a personal favor that you  
Be spared the punishment justly due?  
Well, be not afraid!  
Let your case be laid  
Here before me. Though poor you are  
And alone you must stand at the judgment bar  
With the best and the worst of you known, my son,  
I'll forgive you most of the wrong you've done."

If these lines you've read  
You may think them odd,  
But the man was dead  
And the judge was God.

## *The Plain Road*

Let my road be the plain road,  
The simple and the sane road,  
The road where friendly men abide,  
Dividing joys and woes.

I want to fare the main road,  
The pleasure and the pain road,  
The road that winds through all the cares  
Which everybody knows.

I would not take the high road,  
The boastful "this is my road,"  
The road which seems to run away  
From other people's care;  
I would not tread the blind road,  
The selfish "never mind" road  
Which leads to cold forgetfulness  
Of pain that others bear.

I want to walk the long road,  
"The understanding wrong" road,  
The road where flowers of pity bloom  
And pomp is seldom seen.  
I want to walk the true road,  
The common dare and do road,  
Where men forgive the faults they find  
And hearts are seldom mean.

## *Neighboring*

I remember when a boy that my mother used to say:  
"Mind the house a little while, for I won't be long  
away.

I'm just going 'cross the street for perhaps an hour  
or two;

Mrs. Smith is very ill and I'll see what I can do."  
None of us had money then, so when trouble came  
about,

Neighbors up and down the street had to help each  
other out.

I have watched her many a time stirring custard or  
a cake

For the dainty bit of food which some invalid could  
take.

And when sickness came to us so the neighbors ral-  
lied 'round;

For the burdens we must bear many a helping hand  
we found.

But our fortunes rose and rose and we ceased to  
play the friend,

And we ceased to look for help, having money we  
could spend.

When whatever people wish they possess the coin  
to buy

There is very little left for the neighbors to supply.

When for hospital attention there is money in the  
purse,

Kindly women on the street one another needn't  
nurse.

Thus with wealth at every hand and with rising  
bonds and shares

We raced blindly on our way, each about his own  
affairs.

But we're back to simpler ways, and the mothers  
more and more

Will go slipping 'cross the street to some troubled  
neighbor's door.

And they'll help to nurse the sick and they'll stir up  
custards, too,

In the same unselfish way that our mothers used to  
do.

Oh, we've had our fling at wealth, now we're back  
to living plain,

Back to all that friendship means, back to neigh-  
boring again.

## *Mice, Absolutely Free!*

“Want a pair of mice,” says Janet, “in a week or two?

Build a cage and I will give two of mine to you.  
Got to ask your mother first? I can tell you now  
Mice are something parents absolutely won’t allow!

“Here’s the way to do it. I have many a mouse to spare.

Come and look at them to-day and pick yourself a pair.

They’re all furred out and ready. Yes, they’re at the proper age.

So go and get some grown-up man you know to build a cage.

“But don’t you tell your mother, and don’t you tell your dad

And don’t you sit around and say that mice you wish you had,

For though they’re just as pretty and as cute as they can be

It seems white mice are something every grown-up hates to see.

“If you ask them may you have them, ‘No!’ is what they’re sure to say;

But if you take them home with you perhaps they'll  
let them stay.

That's how I had to do it. Now my cage is full of  
mice

And I wish you'd take a couple, for you'll find them  
very nice."

## *Self-Importance*

The man was very serious and pompous and imperious,  
A most important citizen beyond the slightest doubt;  
For grown-ups always bowed to him, and flatterers kow-towed to him  
While seekers after favors used to follow him about.

One day the wind his hat blew off and with it down the street flew off.  
It bowled it over curb and track, as if it didn't know,  
Or knowing didn't care at all that great men cannot bear at all  
To have their shining hats removed by all the winds that blow.

But even more disturbing was the fact that on the curbing was  
A little boy of seven or eight who dared to laugh aloud.  
A little chap supremely bright, who thought it was a funny sight  
To see a hat being chased by one so very stiff and proud.

Big man, remember any day the wind can blow your  
hat away  
And set you running after it, as commoners must  
do;  
And though in deference to your pride, their mirth  
the grown-up flatterers hide,  
Not caring who or what you are a child will  
laugh at you.

## *Eclipse*

A man—in hand a bit of glass—  
Calls: “Neighbors, run!  
Come quickly! See the cold moon pass  
’Twixt earth and sun.

“Behold the shadow as it spins  
Along the way.  
How strangely evening time begins  
At middle day.”

One says he thinks eclipses show  
That men are wise,  
Who have contrived so much to know  
About the skies.

Another glances once or twice  
And then no more,  
Saying: “Eclipses may be nice,  
But me they bore!”

“Here is a work that baffles men!”  
Another cries.  
“No, thanks! I will not look again.  
It hurts my eyes!”

## *St. Valentine*

The wise Charles Lamb once penned a line  
Of praise to Bishop Valentine.  
"In all the calendar," said he,  
"No mitred father's like to thee!  
Thy choristers from near and far  
The happy, singing Cupids are!"

"This day which has been christened thine  
Has given us the valentine,  
By which the lover in his daze  
Sends forth some sweet and pretty phrase,  
Engraved on arrowed heart or bell,  
The ardor of his love to tell."

Old Bishop Valentine, you chose  
A diocese which larger grows.  
No loss, nor hurt, nor troubled day  
Drive your parishioners away.  
Whatever shocks at men are hurled,  
Love will contrive to run the world.

## *The Apple Vendor*

The apple man upon the corner worries me a lot.  
I wonder if he sells enough to pay his rent or not;  
I wonder if he lives alone, or has he children small,  
And just how many apples he must sell to feed  
them all.

It's no concern of mine, of course; I've never  
learned his name,  
I don't know where he goes to, nor from whence  
the fellow came,  
And yet I never see him on the corner with his box  
But I wonder how he stands it in those worn-out  
shoes and socks.

I wonder as I pass him what misfortune cut him  
down  
And left him selling apples on some corner of the  
town;  
And if his wife is grateful for the little that he  
gives,  
And what he does on Sunday and just where it is  
he lives.

I wonder who his friends are, and is he what he  
seems,

Or a man of high ambitions in the wreckage of his  
dreams?

And has he wasted chances or done everything he  
could?

And a thousand other questions which I wish I un-  
derstood.

## *Wedding Plans*

It's all planned and settled. They'll be married very soon.

I think that Ma's decided on an early day in June,  
And I chuckle as I watch her in her most efficient  
way

Already giving orders for that coming wedding day;  
At the slightest provocation into action mother  
springs

And it's plain to everybody that she's taken hold of  
things!

When I whisper: "Ma, remember, you have had  
your wedding day

And perhaps these happy youngsters feel they'd like  
a word to say,"

She replies: "I'm only helping with my counsel and  
advice.

Only just a little anxious to have everything that's  
nice;

And they're both so young and loving—they prefer  
to bill and coo

While I plan their wedding for them—it's a job I  
like to do!"

Well, I'm sitting by and watching, and I chuckle to  
myself

As Ma tells what pots and skillets shall fill up the  
pantry shelf,

And I chuckle as she tells them just what furniture  
to buy  
Or just what extra pieces friends and kinsfolk may  
supply.  
When that little home is finished it will be the  
dwelling grand  
Which the bride's devoted mother has for ages  
dreamed and planned.

And the more I think about it all the more I'm  
moved to say  
That a mother's best adventure is her daughter's  
wedding day.  
From the coming of the baby, through the journey  
of the years  
She is planning for that moment when the groom-  
to-be appears.  
And the minute things are settled, till the hour the  
church bell rings,  
It's a mother's blessed privilege to take command  
of things.

## *The Dog*

I've never known a dog to wag  
His tail in glee he did not feel,  
Nor quit an old-time friend to tag  
At some more influential heel.  
The yellowest cur I ever knew  
Was to the boy who loved him true.

I've never known a dog to show  
Half-way devotion to his friend ;  
To seek a kinder man to know,  
Or richer, but unto the end,  
The humblest dog I ever knew  
Was to the man who loved him true.

I've never known a dog to take  
Affection for a present gain,  
A false display of love to make  
Some little favor to attain.  
I've never known a Prince or Spot  
That seemed to be what he was not.

But I have known a dog to fight  
With all his strength to aid a friend,  
And whether wrong or whether right,  
To stick with him until the end.  
And I have known a dog to lick  
The hand of him whom men would kick.

And I have known a dog to bear  
Starvation pangs from day to day,  
With him who had been glad to share  
His bread and meat along the way.  
No dog, however mean or rude,  
Is guilty of ingratitude.

The dog is listed with the dumb,  
No voice has he to speak his creed,  
His messages to humans come  
By faithful conduct and by deed.  
He shows, as seldom mortals do,  
A high ideal of being true.

## *The Farm Hand*

I watched him in the blazing field,  
Harrowing for September's yield,  
A rugged lad in denim jeans  
A subject fit for pastoral scenes,  
Which would have caught the eager eye  
Of any artist passing by.

No mercy showed the blazing sun.  
I watched the heat waves roll and run  
Across the land, baked hard and brown,  
And wondered if fine folks in town,  
Who smile above their evening's bread,  
Have any notion how they're fed.

So white and delicate and fair  
It comes to table everywhere  
That only farming people know  
What suffering brings the wheat to grow,  
And only country boys can tell  
The toil that makes the soil do well.

Next winter when I sit to dine  
Where silverware and glasses shine  
And bread is passed, in fancy I  
Will see, beneath a cloudless sky,  
That boy enduring cruel heat  
All day within a field of wheat.

## *Gladiolas*

Call them gladiolas! That's how mother knew them!

Never mind the Latin name—it's not half as pretty.

Gladiolas! Everybody in the country grew them  
Thinking they were just the same to people in  
the city.

Came an aunt to visit us one summer time and she  
Had a lot of wisdom and took every chance to  
share it;

Tried to teach us children how to say: "gladioli!"  
Mother wouldn't learn it 'cause she simply  
couldn't bear it.

Call them gladiolas! That is what they'll always be  
To folks who really love 'em and whose natures  
never harden;

People who remember to pronounce "gladioli"  
Maybe aren't familiar with the friendships of a  
garden.

## *Two Sentimentalists*

He was a sentimental man. He'd often shed a tear  
When someone came and poured a tale of sorrow  
in his ear  
And wiping dry his misty eyes he'd say: "I wish  
I knew  
A way to end your misery, but nothing can I do."

His neighbor was a hardened case and gruff as gruff  
could be,  
He never shed a misty tear where anyone could see.  
He mocked and jibed at sentiment and sneered at  
people good  
But if a poor man needed them he'd send him coal  
and wood.

The sentimental man disliked to look on scenes of  
woe.  
He'd talk of wrongs men ought to right, but never  
strike a blow.  
The rough and tough old customer who lacked the  
art of speech  
Befriended every weaker man who stepped within  
his reach.

I do not think I'm fit to judge man's conduct on this  
earth.

I know it's very difficult to value human worth.  
I merely note this difference, 'twixt two men, wide  
apart,  
The one had pity on his lips—the other in his heart.

## *The Wayward*

Sometimes into the finest group there slips  
The plunderer and the cheat  
Who, with a sullen look upon his lips,  
Mocks good men he may meet.

And those who well their high employments bear  
Are sick with hurt and shame,  
That one who has no thought for them must share  
Their calling and their fame.

High-minded men forever here must face  
With shame's hot burning cheek  
The deeds of those who find with them a place—  
The traitorous and the weak.

To every family come the ones who fail—  
The strange, black sheep—  
And only God knows why they are so frail  
And how their fellows weep!

## *Victim of Fear*

He feared so much the growing old  
And poverty's grim curse  
That he refused to let the gold  
Escape his tight-locked purse  
And let his youth turn gray with mould—  
A tragedy much worse!

He robbed his middle-age of all  
That makes a lifetime sweet  
And walked, with fortune at his call,  
A poor man down the street,  
Fearing that when the shadows fall  
Such poverty he'd meet.

In giving he found no delight.  
With fortune at his side  
He thought with failing strength and sight  
He'd need what coins provide.  
He lived a poor life that he might  
Be rich the day he died.

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